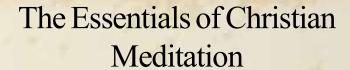


# The Essentials of Christian Meditation

A Transcript
of two
Seminars by
Lionel D C Hartley, PhD

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Seminar 1: Meditation Matters
The What, Who & Why of Meditation.

#### Promo:

Meditation is not what you think. Eastern meditation empties the mind and centres the meditator on self. Christian meditation fills the mind and centres the meditator on Christ. In the 15th Century, the Puritan writer Edmund Calamy wrote, "A true meditation is when a man doth so meditate of Christ as to get his heart inflamed with the love of Christ; so meditate of the Truths of God, as to be transformed into them; and so meditate of sin as to get his heart to hate sin." He went on to say that in order to do good, meditation must enter three doors: the door of understanding, the door of the heart and affections, and the door of practical living. "Thou must so meditate of God as to walk as God walks; and so to meditate of Christ as to prize him, and live in obedience to him" (Edmund Calamy, The Art of Divine Meditation, London, Tho. Parkhurst, 1634, pp26, 28). There

are many practical and positive outcomes from meditation, such as connection with our Creator, peace, rest, inner joy, reassurance, hope, solutions to life's problems, healing and health. But did you know that Christian meditation also has its dangers? What does the Bible say? Christian meditation is simply when we focus on attitude rather than outcome; on the whom of prayer and bible study not the what. In the first of a series of two seminars on The essential of Christian Meditation, Dr Lionel Hartley looks at the original languages of the Bible and reveals some surprising truths. In the second seminar we learn some very practical ways to incorporate Christian meditation into our spiritual growth experience. Through some hands-on activities we look at prayer and meditation and why some prayers are answered and why some are not.

#### Program:

- 1. Meditation is Not What You Think! (What is Christian Meditation?)
- 2. Differences between Christian Meditation and Other Forms of Meditation (Centering Prayer & Contemplation, Kabbalah & Qabalah, Mindfulness Meditation, Ridhwan School Diamond Approach, Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF), Transcendental Meditation, Tibetan Buddhism, Zen Buddhism & Ch'an)
- 3. Biblical References to Meditation
- 4. Meditation Dangers
- 5. The Power of Prayer
- 6. Practical Outcomes from Meditation connection with our Creator, peace, rest, inner joy, reassurance, hope, solutions to life's problems, healing & health.
- 7. Question & Answer Session

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Slide 1 – Title Slide

Slide 2 – Intro video clip

Slide 3 – Who is your seminar author Since the 1960's, the "Christian West" has shown a growing interest in eastern religions and some of their practices. The New Age influence has stimulated the multiplication of workshops, clubs and clinics associated with Yoga, Zen, Buddhist and Taoist related practices, Transcendental Meditation (or TM) and the like. In particular, the practice of meditation has become popular, even trendy. Today meditation is definitely "in." Through diverse media, a variety of meditation techniques are encouraged promising results such as inner peace, fulfilment and enlightenment, better mental and

physical health, increased intelligence and creativity. Meditation promoters recommend meditation stools, cushions, background music, postures and sacred places. They invite you to "enter into the realm of meditation," to "seek your personal revelation," to "tap into the power of your mind." In the Bible we also find references to meditation. Today's seminar is the first of two investigation the essentials of Christian Meditation. Today will be mostly theory with an activity or two thrown in the mix. Part two will be intensely practical with a number of hands-on activities and useful resources.

Slide 4 – What is meditation But before we look at meditation from the Christian perspective, we need to ask a few questions: "Is Christian meditation similar to that practiced in eastern religions?" "Can we combine them?" "What is Christian meditation?"

Before entering the promised land, God instructed Joshua: "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful" (Josh 1:8). It is important to notice that the biblical definition of meditation encourages an active mind, focused thinking. Here Joshua is commanded by God not only to read the law, but take the necessary time to meditate on it, to think about it, to reflect on it. This meditation is a calm and disciplined "chewing the cud" of God's words. The insights and

convictions gained through this meditation will lead naturally to God pleasing attitudes and activities that He can bless.

The "chewing the cud" concept of meditation is quite biblical...

Overlay Slide 4 – Hebrew Hagah The Hebrew word for meditate is 'Hagah'. Hagah is spelled äâlä (Hei, Gimmel, Hei – Hebrew is read from right to left). It is a sigh (the Talmud in Menachot 29b teaches that this letter Hei is God's sacred breath), it means to contemplate, ponder and study. The Hebrew letter ä (Hei), the fifth letter in Hebrew alphabet, is the pictogram for wonder (to marvel, to be in awe).

Gimmel, the 3rd letter in Hebrew Alphabet (Alef, Bet, Gimmel) has a picture word of a camel, an animal

that chews the cud like a cow. In very ancient Hebrew the pictogram for Gimmel looked like a foot, symbolising moving forward or carrying – reminding us that meditation is actually active and not passive.

Slide 5 – What is Eastern or New Age meditation?

In order to relax or achieve inner peace, meditation techniques based on Eastern religions suggest ways to empty your mind. By choosing to disconnect from reality, either by concentrating on your breathing, by repeating again and again a word or set of sounds (called a "mantra"), or focusing all your attention on one object (like a light or a tree), the mind enters into peaceful standby. It is a mystic or psychic experience.

Let's look at some examples of this mind-emptying self-centred process:

Overlay Slide 5 – Centering Prayer & Contemplation Centering prayer originated in St. Joseph's Abbey, a Trappist monastery in Spencer, Massachusetts. During the twenty years (1961-1981) when Thomas Keating was abbot, St. Joseph's held dialogues with Buddhist and Hindu representatives, and a Zen master gave a week-long retreat to the monks. A former Trappist monk who had become a Transcendental Meditation teacher also gave a session to the monks. Many people assume centering prayer is compatible with Christian tradition, but in fact the techniques of centering prayer are neither Christian nor prayer. They are at the level of human faculties and as

such are an operation of man, not of God. The deception and dangers can be grave. Centering prayer differs from Christian prayer in that the intent of the technique is to bring the practitioner to the centre of his own being. There he is, supposedly, to experience the presence of the God who indwells him. Christian prayer, on the contrary, centres upon God in a relational way, as someone apart from oneself. True prayer goes to God from the centre of one's being, not in the centre of one's being.

Slide 6 – Kabbalah or Qabalah Kabbalah or Qabalah is a Jewish technique taught by Yehuda Ashlag; David Coope and Michael Laitman. Jewish scholar Gershom Scholem in his book *Kabbalah*, p3 writes, "Kabbalah' is the traditional and most commonly used term for the esoteric teachings of Judaism and for Jewish mysticism."

Although it is surprising that in order to study Hebrew Mysticism, one has to live in a Torah-observant community, be a Jewish male who is married and over the age of thirty, and study under the direction of an enlightened Jewish master. Is it any wonder that strange concepts such as this quote from Allan Cronshaw's book The Divine Marriage, reveals that Kabbalah is to (quote), "raise up the lower centers by engaging them within a Divinely Ordained Marriage – thereby causing the upper to be One with the lower, giving birth to the Son of God within the disciple in search of Truth." In other words by the practice of Kabbalah we can create Messiah God within ourselves. Avi Ben

Mordechai in his commentary *Messiah* Vol. 3, p42 writes, "True Kabbalah is a receiving of Divine light, but this is not physical light as we know it. Rather, it is a powerful but invisible light that has the Divine lifeforce behind it. And when we receive this light into our heart, the darkness is not able to withstand it".

Slide 7 – Mindfulness Meditation?
What is mindfulness meditation?
Mindfulness meditation (MM) is
rooted in the East (China, India, Tibet)
It is moment-by-moment focused
awareness of the breath, body, mind,
and environment. Mindfulness
Meditation is not limited to formal
periods of sitting meditation because it
also includes moment-by-moment
awareness of what is going on inside
and outside of yourself throughout the

day. The focus, which is based in Hatha Yoga, is on our breathing and proponents insist that (and I quote): "When your mind wanders into thoughts, memories, daydreams, images, ideas, worries, tasks, stories, body sensations, passions, or sounds, gently return to the breath. Let everything go. Returning over and over again to the breath is the process itself." The focus is on pauses between breaths, changes between breathing in and breathing out, and changes in how deep you breathe and the speed of the breaths. The purpose is to clear and empty the mind.

Slide 8 – Ridhwan School Diamond Approach The Ridhwan School Diamond Approach was founded in the 1970s, is called the "Work", draws from psychology and integrates a spiritual approach to self liberation
This approach originated in Sufi Islam's mystical Psychology and promoted by A H Almaas (known to his devotes as Hameed Ali) This approach uses a technique known as mystical inquiry and involves breathing exercises and retreats.

Slide 9 – Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF)

Founded in 1920 and popularised as yoga-meditation in the USA, Self-Realization Fellowship teaches a direct path t0 self-realization through ancient Yoga techniques. Self-Realization Fellowship (or SRF) is based on Hindu Kriya Yoga and is taught by gurus such as Paramahansa Yogananda.

It involves a series of what are called *Energization Exercises* and is taught by mailed lessons, retreats. Note also that SRF demands a guru relationship with a mentor.

Slide 10 – Transcendental Meditation Transcendental Meditation (or TM) is, in reality, Hinduism adapted by the Hindu guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi for use in a Western cultural setting. Mahesh Yogi, employing the terminology of the ancient Vedic tradition, speaks of the practice of TM as to plunge into deep, deep rest for fifteen or twenty minutes twice a day to experience (quote) "the Absolute". According to Mahesh Yogi, when the practitioner goes to his deepest self, he finds in himself an image and participation of God, and he finds God himself.

The Christian's Absolute is God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We invite the Holy Spirit to dwell within us, but we don't look inside to find God – God is revealed in our outward acts not in our inner feelings. God is revealed in our behaviour not our biology.

Consider also that the introductory ceremony to Transcendental Meditation, the Puja, involves worship of a dead Hindu guru and that the mantras given to those being initiated are in fact the names of Hindu gods.

Slide 11 – Tibetan Buddhism
Meditation
Tibetan Buddhism Meditation follows
(and I quote), "The model of nonviolence loving compassion of sentient
beings with ongoing dialogue with
neuroscience researchers." It stems

from various Tibetan lineages and was promoted by the 14th Dalai Lama as well as Panchen Lama, Chogyam Trungpa and 17th Karmapa Mantra. Tibetan Buddhism Meditation uses a combination of Visualization, Chanting, Rlung-sgom walking and Mudras. In Rlung-sgom walking, the focus is on very slow walking body movements, chanting what each part does, e.g. 'legs up, legs down, legs up, legs down'.

Slide 12 – Zen Buddhism and Ch'an Zen Buddhism and Ch'an is a combination of both the Chinese and Japanese tradition that arrived in USA after WWII and has since gone global, including here in this country. Most Zen meditation literature is in Japanese, so frustratingly, a number of key manuscripts that I researched in

preparing today's seminar required translation from Japanese.

The main teachers are Bodhidharma; Eisai; Dogan; Huang Po; Charlotte Joko Beck; Claude A. Thomas. Zen Buddhism and Ch'an use a technique called Zazen that involve the martial arts, specifically Kungfu and is practiced through Zen arts such as ceramics, archery and calligraphy. (Aside: Kungfu is a combination of karate and judo)

Slide 13 – What is Christian Meditation?

Eastern or New Age meditation has as its main aim, a process of emptying the mind.

It must be acknowledged that the emptying of the mind can lead to a spiritual experience. For example, many testify how hypnosis and trance

have opened their life to the influence and torment of evil spirits. Notice the stark contrast between

Notice the stark contrast between Christian meditation and Eastern or New Age meditation.

Slide 14 – What is Christian Meditation?

Christian meditation leads to freedom and blessing through the filling of the mind while the other offers a false or transient peace by seeking to empty the mind.

It is a false peace because it is achieved through denial. It is a peace apart from God. Christian meditation encourages an active rather that a passive mind; constructive thinking rather than mindless drifting. When we live difficult times, the practice of Christian meditation eventually leads us to face the source of anxiety, guilt,

sin or conflict. The Lord uses this meditation to correct our defective thinking or lead us to recognition, confession and restoration. Those who try to empty their mind are really trying to run away from their problems. The feeling of peace and wellbeing achieved through a static or vacant mind is at best artificial and short-lived. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (Jn 14:27).

Slide 15 – The content of Christian meditation

Our minds can be actively engaged in good as well as bad things (Ps 38:12).

Therefore the Psalmist prays "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in

your sight, O LORD" (Ps 19:14). Some of the Psalms suggest good themes for our meditation.

Overlay Slide 15 x 2

(a) The Word of God: "Oh how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day... I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation" (Ps 119:97-99). Meditation of God's Word leads to improved understanding.

Overlay Slide 15 x 2

(b) The works of God: "I will meditate on all your works and consider all your mighty deeds." "I will meditate on your wonderful works" (Ps 77:12; 145:5). This could include meditating on the wonders of God's creation, God's acts of judgment and of grace, the sublime act

when God the Father gave His beloved Son and what has been achieved when the Lord Jesus gave His life to save a lost world.

# Overlay Slide 15 x 2

(c) Past experiences with the Lord: "So my spirit grows faint within me; my heart within me is dismayed. I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done. I spread out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land" (Ps 143:3-6). We can meditate on God's dealings with humans over the years. This is a particular type of work of God. We may also reflect on how the Lord has touched our own life in the past and how He is dealing with us today.

# Overlay Slide 15 x 2

(d) The Lord Himself: "Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love." "May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD" (Ps 48:9; 104:34). We can meditate on some of the attributes of God, such as His love, goodness, mercy, patience, holiness, justice, faithfulness, nearness, greatness, transcendence, etc., and the attractive virtues we see in our Lord Jesus Christ. You will find that it is difficult to meditate on Him without talking to Him. Christian meditation and prayer are closely related.

Slide 16 – Forms of Christian Meditation

A man was seated on a park bench when a little chap of about five sat down beside him and started winding what appeared to be a most prized possession-a watch. "My, what a pretty watch," remarked the man. "Does it tell you the time?" "No sir," replied the boy; "you gotta look at it."

Do you know the Book of the Lord ...

or the Lord of the Book of the Lord ...
or the Lord of the Book?
Jeremiah 15:16 reads, "Thy words
were found, and I did eat them; and
thy word was unto me the joy and
rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called
by thy name, O LORD God of hosts."

Overlay - Slide 16 - The practice of Christian meditation (Nature)
When the Christian's mind turns to nature, his heart turns toward God in worship and praise. But when the unbelieving mind turns to nature, it often may turn from God. For many people looking at nature simply

highlights pollution and our degradation of the environment. Their only hope in life is centred on man's efforts to save the earth. In reality, there is only one hope. That hope is not in us saving our planet from being destroyed, but in God saving men and women from destroying themselves. The unconverted mind simply does not think of God when it looks at nature. Indeed, the unbelieving mind sees nature as a god.

Overlay 2 - Slide 16 (Psalm 8)
Psalm 8 Reads "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. ... When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that

you care for him You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet – all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!"

I have prepared a handout with extra resources on this.

Slide 17 – The practice of Christian meditation (prayer)

A small town in America had never had a pub and had historically been promoted as "dry," but then a local businessman decided to build a tavern. A group of Christians from a local

church were concerned and planned an all-night prayer meeting to ask God to intervene. It just so happened that shortly thereafter lightning struck the bar and it burned to the ground. The owner of the bar sued the church, claiming that the prayers of the congregation were responsible, but the church hired a lawyer to argue in court that they were not responsible. The presiding judge, after his initial review of the case, stated that, "no matter how this case comes out, one thing is clear. The tavern owner believes in prayer and the Christians do not."

Slide 18 (Patience Strong)
Meditation as prayer is summed up in this poem attributed to Patience Strong:

When you're very busy and you've heaps of work to do
And when you're tired and can't see how you're going to get through,
Just stand quite still and tell yourself, that in those crowded hours
You will be given guidance, quiet strength and inner powers.

### Slide 19

... You say you have no leisure time, but surely you can spare
A moment in the hectic day? You may be anywhere A shop, a street, an office - any place that you may be Just calm your worried, flurried thoughts,

Slide 20 and praying quietly...

You'll find new zest, new energy. The will to start again And you'll complete your daily work without the stress and strain.

### Slide 21

We will focus on prayer in our next seminar on the Essentials of Christian Meditation, and I have a homework sheet that I would like you to complete in readiness.

## Slide 22

It has been said that if you know how to worry, you have the necessary skills to meditate! What do you do when you worry? You talk to yourself. You ask your self "what if..." "Why did..." "How can..." Similarly, when you meditate on Scripture, you talk to yourself about it. It is a chewing process. We start by asking the Lord

to speak to us through His word, to illuminate our minds. We read a chapter or so, but we stop or go back to that verse or expression that caught our attention. We then begin to talk to ourselves about it. We can ask ourselves questions such as: What could this mean? What does this say about God? Is this something I should do? How can I lean on this truth? Does it point to a sin I should confess? Alternate between speaking to yourself and speaking to the Lord.

Lets practice this now with an exercise

# **ACTIVITY**

It is better to understand a little than to misunderstand a lot.

The model for Prayer is given for us in what is commonly called the Lord's

Prayer. Matthew 6:9-14 It can best be remembered by the use of the acrostic ACTS:

Adoration - Praising God's attributes and character

Confession - Confession of our sins to God,

Thanksgiving - Thanksgiving for the blessings we have received from Him Supplication - Petitions for the blessings we need. 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Remember these don't necessarily need to be in this order, but putting them this way does make it easier to remember, and I may be sensible to praise God before asking for anything.

(See also slide 34 – then back to 22) The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) contains all the elements of effective prayer, best remembered by using the acronym A.C.T.S.: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication.

The 'Lord's Prayer' was addressed to: 'Our Father which art in heaven' (Vs 9a)

Starts with our Adoration: 'Hallowed be thy name' (Vs 9b)

Followed by our supplication for universal need: 'Thy kingdom come' (Vs 10a)

Followed by our Thanksgiving: 'Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven' (Vs 10b)

Followed by our supplication for physical need: 'Give us this day our daily bread' (Vs11)

Followed by our confession: 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors' (Vs 12)

Followed by our supplication for spiritual need: 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil' (Vs 13a)

Finishes with our Adoration: 'For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory' (Vs 13b)
Finalised by our affirmation: Amen (So be it!)

Now I would like to suggest that we spend a few minutes writing our own prayer using this formula.

Here is an example:

A – Adoration: Precious Lord, we praise you for who you are and what you have done, are doing and plan to do in our lives.

C – Confession: We confess to you that we have sinned – sins that no one knows and sins that everyone knows;

sins that burden us and sins that do not bother us any more but ought to.

T – Thanksgiving: Thank You for our needs that we have received from your bounty

S – Supplication: We ask wisdom for ourselves and even greater blessings for others.

Overlay Slide 22 – Stop timer

Slide 23 – Benefits of Christian meditation
Of course it is good to listen to
Scriptural sermons and attend Biblical seminars. Of course it is good to read
Christian books, watch Christian videos and listen to Christian music.
But none of these can yield the benefits of meditation. Charles H
Spurgeon once said, "It is well to meditate upon the things of God,

because thus we get the real nutriment out of them." In other words, Christian meditation is spiritual medication.

Meditation makes truth real to us. It helps truth travel from the head to the heart. It opens truth, it fixes truth in our mind, it warms our heart.

Slide 24 – Benefits of Christian meditation
The Power of Prayer video segment (9 minutes, 23 seconds)
(Distribute Associated handouts during video.)

Slide 25 – Dangers of Christian meditation
Can Christian meditation be dangerous? Yes it can. It can be dangerous because as we meditate, we

focus only on one text or one truth. We can only chew on what fits into our mouth! The danger therefore is to work on a verse ignoring the general Biblical context, to chew, eat and digest only on one side of a truth. For example, like the psalmist David we can meditate on God's unfailing love. We can enjoy and maybe even begin to feel the warmth of His love. But in doing so, we should not forget that our loving God is also a righteous and a holy God. In the contemplation of or meditation on any passage of scripture we need to remember that a text without context is a proof-text pretext. The Concise Oxford Dictionary calls this 'decontextualization'.

Christian meditation is completely different from New Age type

meditation. Seeking to empty or disconnect our minds can be dangerous. On the contrary, we should follow Paul's advice to Timothy and engage our minds with God's words: "Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this" (2 Tm. 2:7). Christian meditation is a chewing process. As Christians we are encouraged to meditate of God's Word, God's works and on God Himself. This will enhance our spirituality by making God's truth real in our experience. The next time you read your Bible, make a little time to be still and to meditate. If you have stopped doing so, start again. The Lord's invitation still stands: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps 46:10).

And another danger is having unrealistic expectations.

Eric Braithewaite, the author of "To Sir With Love" and later to become the Guyanese ambassador to the UN, tells in His book "Reluctant Neighbours", of a time when his young daughter was dying. He pleaded with God to save her life and God did not. He concluded that a God who could allow the death of an innocent young girl was not a desirable God and he gave God away.

Contrast that to the following story:
One day a lady was giving her little
nephew some lessons. He was
generally a good, attentive child, but
on this occasion he could not fix his
mind on his work. Suddenly he said,
"Auntie, may I kneel down and ask
God to help me find my marble?" His
aunt gave her consent, and the little
boy knelt by his chair, closed his eyes,

and prayed silently. Next day, almost afraid of asking the question lest the child had not found his toy and so might lose his simple faith, the lady said to him, "Well, dear, have you found your marble?" "No, Auntie," was the reply, "but God made me not want to." That is the way God many times answers our prayers and thus rids us of division within ourselves.

God always answers prayer with a "yes", "no", "wait", or "here's something different or better".

And a fourth danger is praying to anyone other than God.

1 Timothy 2:5 says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

There is no one else that can mediate with God for us. If Jesus is the only

mediator, that indicates Mary, the saints or even a effigy of Garfield the Cat cannot be mediators. They cannot mediate our prayer requests to God. Romans 8:26-27 describes the Holy Spirit assisting in intercession for us, but remember, the Holy Spirit is also a living God, unlike a statue of a deceased person, no matter how saintly there were when they were alive.

Slide 26 – Practical Outcomes from Meditation

Overlay slide 26 – Connection with our Creator
He was just a little boy, on a week's first day.
He was wandering home from Sunday School, and dawdling on the way.

He scuffed his shoes into the grass; he found a caterpillar.
He found a fluffy milkweed pod, and blew out all the "filler".

A bird's nest in a tree overhead, so wisely placed on high,
Was just another wonder that caught his eager eye.

A neighbour watched his zig zag course, and hailed him from the lawn, Asked him where he'd been that day and what was going on.

"I've been to Bible School," he said and turned a piece of sod. He picked up a wiggly worm replying, "I've learned a lot of God." "M'm very fine way," the neighbour said, "for a boy to spend his time." "If you'll tell me where God is, I'll give you a brand new dime." Quick as a flash the answer came! Nor were his accents faint.

"I'll give you a dollar, Mister, if you can tell me where God ain't."

Overlay slide 26 – Peace Poet Edwin Markham wrote, "At the heart of the cyclone tearing the sky / And flinging the clouds and the towers by, / Is a place of central calm; / here in the roar of mortal things, / I have a place where my spirit sings, / In the hollow of God's palm.

Overlay slide 26 – Rest
Orin L. Crain wrote, Slow me down,
Lord. Ease the pounding of my heart
by the quieting of my mind. Steady
my hurried pace with a vision of the
eternal reach of time. Give me, amid
the confusion of the day, the calmness

of the everlasting hills. Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Teach me the art of taking minute vacations — of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to smile at a child, to read a few lines from a good book. Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of life's enduring values, that I may grow toward my greater destiny. Remind me each day that the race is not always to the swift; that there is more to life than increasing its speed. Let me look upward to the towering oak and know that it grew great and strong because it grew slowly and well. The Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King Charles I of England, lies buried in Newport Church, in the Isle of

Wight. During the time of her father's troubles she was a prisoner in Carisbrook Castle, in the same beautiful island. While there, she had a long spell of sickness. She was found one day, dead in her bed with her Bible open before her, and her finger resting on these words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." A monument in Newport, erected by Queen Victoria, represents the young princess with her head bowed in death, and her hand rests on a marble book before her, her finger pointing to the words.

Overlay slide 26 – Inner joy Among the students at a college was a young man on crutches. Although not a handsome fellow, he had a talent for friendliness and optimism, and he earned many scholastic honours as well as the respect of his classmates. One day a new student asked him what had caused him to become so badly crippled. "Infantile paralysis," replied the genial young man. "With a misfortune like that," exclaimed the other fellow, "how can you face the world so confidently and so happily?"

"Oh," replied the polio victim, "the disease never touched my heart."

Men have pursued joy in every avenue imaginable. Some have successfully found it while others have not. Perhaps it would be easier to describe where joy cannot be found:

Not in Unbelief – Voltaire was an infidel of the most pronounced type.

He wrote: "I wish I had never been born."

Not in Pleasure – Lord Byron lived a life of pleasure if anyone did. He wrote: "The worm, the canker, and grief are mine alone."

Not in Money – Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying, he said: "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

Not in Position and Fame – Lord Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote: "Youth is a mistake; manhood a struggle; old age a regret."

Not in Military Glory – Alexander the Great conquered the known world in his day. Having done so, he wept in his tent, before he said, "There are no more worlds to conquer."

Where then is real joy found? – the answer is simple, in Christ alone.

Overlay slide 26 – Reassurance When the Golden Gate Bridge was constructed, it was then the longest, highest, widest, costliest bridge in the world. Because of the danger, work proceeded behind schedule. Then someone hit on a brilliant idea. Why not build a net under the construction area? Then, if any workman fell, he would not tumble to his death, but would land in the net and thus be saved. So a giant safety net of stout cord was made and swung under the construction work, the first time in history a major construction that such a net had been used. This safety net reportedly cost around one hundred thousand dollars. Because the workmen knew that if they did slip,

they would not fall to their death, the work then proceeded at a much faster rate.

Overlay slide 26 – Hope In Robert Louis Stevenson's story of a storm, he describes a ship caught off a rocky coast, threatening death to all on board. When terror among the passengers was at its worst, one man more daring than the rest, making the perilous passage to the pilot-house, saw the pilot lashed to his post with his hands on the wheel, turning the ship little by little into the open sea. When the pilot beheld the ghastly white, terror-stricken face of the man, he smiled, and the man rushed to the deck below shouting, "I have seen the face of the pilot and he smiled. All is well." The sight of that smiling face averted panic and converted despair

into hope. It is through prayer and meditation that we see the smiling face of God.

Overlay slide 26 – Solutions to life's problems

In his book, A Gift of Hope, author Robert Veninga describes this transforming experience, which took place in the life of a 41-year-old man after he prayed:

"I left work early after hearing that I would lose my job. I got in my car and went to my church. Unfortunately the minister was not there. But the chapel was open. I went in and stared at the cross. I started to cry. I told God that I didn't have the strength to get through this mess. And I asked for help. I must have sat there for a couple of hours. I brushed away my tears. Suddenly a whole load went off my shoulders. I

can't explain it, but I went into that chapel crushed and I came out feeling strong. I actually felt that I could make it."

Overlay slide 26 – Healing & health. Book editor Edythe Draper saw the connection between our health and prayer when she garnered this anonymous piece: He who formed our frame / Made man a perfect whole / And made the body's health / Depend upon the soul.

Relaxation is another such outcome and we will be discussing this in our next seminar today, Learning to Relax.

Slide 27 – Our next program is an intensely practical one with loads of resources and hands-on activities.

Seminar 2: The Mechanics of Meditation
The How, Where & When of meditation.

# Program:

- 1. Review: Meditation is not what you think! (What is Christian Meditation?)
- 2. Meditation Positions and Postures
- 3. Meditation Places
- 4. Meditation Times and Seasons
- 5. Meditation and Relaxation
- 6. Meditation Resources
- 7. Question & Answer Session

Slide 28 – Question & Answer Session

# The Essentials of Christian Meditation

Seminar 2: The Mechanics of Meditation The How, Where & When of meditation.

- 1. Review: Meditation is not what you think! (What is Christian Meditation?)
- 2. Meditation Positions and Postures
- 3. Meditation Places
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- 6. Meditation Resources
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Slide 1 – Title Slide

**Slides 2 – 10** 

Before we start today's program, for the benefit of those who were faithful in doing their homework from the last session, we will briefly review the answers.

Slide 11 – Video clip introduction

#### Slide 12 – Review

In our last program we looked at The What, Who & Why of Meditation. We learnt about different types of meditation and saw that most were focussed on emptying the mind. We saw also that true Christian meditation is a filling of the mind, talking with God and chewing the cud of His word.

Mother Teresa said, "The fruit of silence is prayer. The fruit of prayer is faith. The fruit of faith is love. The fruit of love is service. The fruit of service is peace."

Today we are going to look at the practical side of meditation, that of prayer. We are also going to use Bibles to answer some of our questions.

Sometimes we find it easy to pray when we have time but find it difficult to pray when everything is going well. But when things do not go the way we think we should start praying. A saying that came out of the First World War is "There are no atheists in foxholes" suggesting that when the position

is critical, praying is crucial. The word prayer comes from the Latin *precari*, meaning "to beg." Maybe that is why we are only good at praying when we need help. Growing a prayer life is like building a muscle. When you complete the exercise a little bit at time you begin to grow. Here are a few tools to help along the way.

Slide 13 - 1. Stop

Stopping is hard for us to do some times. There are so many distractions. The mobile 'phone vibrates, or the kids may want something, or you just can't stop thinking of different things that pop into your head. Stopping is very difficult for most of us. We like to stay busy and praying just does not feel busy enough for most people. In Luke 5:16 we find that Jesus withdraws to desolate places to pray. I don't think you need to go into the desert or the forest but a quiet place in your house free of distraction, if you have such a thing, may help you stay focused and less distracted. Yes, that means logging of FaceBook and unplugging the

telephone. Susanna Wesley, mother of 10 children (two of whom became great preachers) advised her children that whenever they saw her sitting on the floor in the middle of the room with her apron over her head she was not to be disturbed as it was her prayer time.

If you are in a family situation you can download a free door-hangar from our website to let others know not to disturb your devotional time.

#### Slide 14 - 2. Reflect

Think about the past experiences where God has been seen during your day. You may write down things throughout the day for you to easily remember how God is seen in your life. Understanding the past may be helpful for moving forward in the future. I like to keep notepaper and a pencil in various places around the house, especially on my bedside table. When things come to mind during the day or night I write things down. I can later use these thoughts in my prayers.

Slide 15 - 3. Forgive Before You Pray You need to forgive other before you pray. That might even be the reason why you are praying. If you have hatred for others, praying to God will be more difficult. God has forgiven you many times for little and big things. You need to do the same and forgive others. These people are only human. They will hurt you. Try to forgive them before praying. If you can't do that, then try praying for them. Wayne Dyer wrote, "Release the need to be upset with others. Remember that anytime you're filled with resentment, you're turning the controls of your emotional life over to others to manipulate."

What is forgiveness? EXERCISE

What is forgiveness? HANDOUT

Slide 16 - 4. Be Honest to God and Yourself Be real with God. Tell him genuinely what's on your heart and mind. This might take the form of a 20-minute monologue or a half-

hour of tears or anger. Being honest about where you are spiritually—your hopes, worries, frustrations, or failures—is essential.

You need to be honest with yourself. You cannot pretend that everything is great or that everything is horrible. Be honest about your current situation. Let go of all your fears and worries and let God take over. Giving up control can be difficult but the changes you see in your life with be worth it.

# Slide 17 – 5. Start early

My wife is a "morning person". She tell me that if she doesn't start her day early, then she'll have to rush through her time in the Word and focused prayer. That's never a good way for anyone to begin. You may be a night owl and like to do your devotional time at 11 p.m. While that may work for your particular wiring as it does mine, I've found that I need to also start my day by asking the Spirit to fill and direct me, ask the Father to show me the sin I'm blind to and

open my heart to receive the truth of His Word for that day. This is like a violinist who tunes his instrument before the concert, plays for the concert and then checks it thoroughly before putting it away afterwards. So I begin my day with what I call my "Seeking God" time. This carries me through the day (I'll talk later about what happens prayer-wise during the day) and at the end the day I close it with my rather lengthy "Discovering God" time. Prayer and God's Word go hand in hand: the Word directs our prayers, and at the same time, prayer is our communication line as we seek to receive instruction from God's Word.

### Slide 18 - 6. confess

God knows all that is in my heart, all I've done, every wrong thought and selfish action. Nothing is hidden from Him, but when we ignore or try to cover and hide our sin, Psalms 66:18 and Psalm 32 tell us that God will not hear our prayers. Confession is agreeing with God about my sin, bringing it into the light, and then turning from it.

# Slide 19 - 7 Respond

As you pray and spend time in Scripture and learn to discern God's voice, he may present you with an invitation to act. When you sense him calling you to do something, respond. Don't sweep the invitation under the rug: whether it's to pray, serve, forgive, submit, generously give, etc.. Act on it. And notice how God uses that.

By responding, we cultivate hearts that are soft and ready to respond to God, rather than remaining complacent or indifferent.

Slide 20 - 8. Pray With Faith Hebrews 11:6 says "Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." You may not fully believe yet, but as you pray and have faith your belief with grow as you see the changes in your life.

Try praying as an act of faith. Even if you don't believe, you can fake belief until it becomes real in your life. Mark Batterson

said in his *The Circle Maker* media series that prayer is like a time capsule. You never know when or where God is going to answer your prayers but you can live the holy anticipation.

Prayer is not like asking the genie from Aladdin for something and in a cloud of smoke it magically appears. But the good news is that you get more than three wishes.

Slide 21 - 9. Talk with God In Luke 18:11 we have the story of a Pharisee – a religious separatist – praying. Although he begins his prayer addressing God, it is clear that he is praying by himself to himself about himself.

Talk to God like you are talking to a close friend. Talk to God, by all means, but don't forget also the importance of talking with God. Prayer is a conversation – a dialogue, not a just monologue.

Slide 22 - 10. Pray out loud You may not like to pray aloud where others can hear or in front of others. But listen when others pray aloud. Hear and learn from the way they talk to God. Each person is different. Some treat him like their best friend. Others keep the prayer to a carefully calculated formula that they use to communicate with him. Hearing people pray for the things in my life makes me feel loved. Praying out loud can help others pray together. If you are in an environment where others can't hear you, praying out loud or at least whispering your prayers can keep you focused on praying.

You can even write them out so that you can stay on track and not wander off.

You won't hear me praying out loud while I'm engaged in conversation with someone, but typically, I'll be lifting up silent prayers—asking God for discernment and help.

Slide 23 - 11. Posture Matters
There is something about going to our knees
in prayer that adjusts our attitude. Because
of degenerative bone disease, I cannot
always pray on my knees, but I can and do

pray when I'm driving, walking, washing dishes, having a shower, or working on some manual task. That is the beauty of having an open door of communication with God. He is Spirit, and He is always accessible. I don't have to physically transport myself to a specific location to pray. It doesn't have to be in church, and I don't have to kneel. But there is something that happens in our heart when kneeling or bowing as we signify that God is worthy of our adoration. Closed eyes and bowed head may help in blocking out distractions, but if they still come, God understands. Just bring your thoughts back to Him when you can and move on.

Slide 24 - 12. Make a Prayer Guide
We can all be busy and forgetful people at
times. We may hear sad news from a friend
or on the news and forget later that day what
we want to pray for. You can have a
notebook or a digital document to remind
yourself who and what to pray for. You can
use bullet points to stay organized. You can

start to ask others how you can pray for them. When they tell you write it down. If I meet someone in the street or shopping centre and they express a need for prayer, I not only write it down I also pray with them on-the-spot if I can. Many a security camera would have captured me praying with someone in a supermarket aisle.

Slide 25 - 13. Keep a prayer journal You may not think that God has answered any of your prayers in the past. Try keeping a journal of all your prayers. Then continue each day going through the list and checking off the prayers that have been answered. There is a plethora of software available to help you if you want to keep a prayer journal on your iPad, laptop or desktop computer. There is one available from Hal Lee Ministries (www.hallee.org). They have a recent version, but I would recommend downloading version 4. If you're using version 4 already, stick with it. Simply ignore the advertising links and you have a very useful and free product.

Start to keep a list of your prayers and if God has answered them. You will soon see answers to prayer you did not even realize were happening. Every week I have a few that were answered according to his will. Not all prayers were answered as I expected and many were not answered in the time frame I would have liked.

If you use a note pad rule it into columns so that you can see the answers and thank God for them specifically. Acknowledging when prayers are answered is important to continue to grow faith and your prayer life. But what about when prayers seem unanswered?

Slide 26 - Exercise: Unanswered Prayer Take your clipboards once again, remove the top page (if you haven't done that already), and follow the instructions on the board.

Handout-Exercise

Handout - Information sheet

What about when God says 'No'?
Eric Braithewaite, the author of "To Sir With Love" and later to become the Guyanese ambassador to the UN, tells in His book "Reluctant Neighbours", of a time when his young daughter was dying. He plead with God to save her life and God did not. He concluded that a God who could allow the death of an innocent young girl was not a desirable God and he gave God away.

Contrast this to the following story:
One day a lady was giving her little nephew some lessons. He was generally a good, attentive child, but on this occasion he could not fix his mind on his work. Suddenly he said, "Auntie, may I kneel down and ask God to help me find my marble?" His aunt gave her consent, and the little boy knelt by his chair, closed his eyes, and prayed silently. Next day, almost afraid of asking the question lest the child had not found his toy and so might lose his simple faith, the lady said to him, "Well, dear, have you found

your marble?" "No, Auntie," was the reply, "but God made me not want to." That is the way God many times answers our prayers and thus rids us of division within ourselves.

Slide 27 - 14. Timed / Trigger moments
Maggie tells me she is having an operation
at 9:00am on Thursday. I write it down in
my diary. I set the timer on my mobile
'phone for 8:30am to remind me to pray for
her. Egbert is travelling to Timbuktu at
1:30am so I jot it down and make a point of
praying about it before retiring to bed the
night before.

Fred has a coffee break at work every weekday at 10:00am and his wife and children know that he is praying for them at that time.

I hear a siren from an ambulance, police car or maybe a fire engine. I use this as a trigger to pray for whoever is anxious because of the siren—it may be an accident victim, it may be a burglar, it may be a speeding motorist, it may be a homeowner whose

house is on fire, it may be other motorists trying to get out of the way of the emergency vehicle, it may be the emergency personnel themselves. Someone or many will be anxious and we can use the trigger of hearing the siren to connect with God and to pray for them.

I see a rainbow and I remember God's promise to Noah in Genesis 9:13 and use the opportunity to praise God for sending the rain but withholding world-wide destruction. Others will contemplate the wonders of God and give him thanks each time they look at a clock face, put on their clothes in the morning or partake of a meal. These are what I call "Trigger Moments" and this is part of practising the presence of God.

Slide 28 - 15 Time & Place (handout) Where and when can we meditate? In the Bible we find people meditating out in a field (Genesis 24:63), in a place of worship (Psalm 48:9) even while lying down in bed! (Psalm 63:6). There are many times and places mentioned in the Bible. I have a handout to expedite getting this material to you.

The following may be worth noting:

- 1. Choose a specific place to pray away from distractions so you can concentrate. Ringing phones and crying children will sabotage your "quiet time" before it gets started.
- 2. Pray at the same time every day, if at all possible. Make it part of your regular routine and it will become habit. Write it into your schedule or appointment diary and then treat it just like a daily appointment.

Slide 29 - 16. Change pace
Change the pace during your prayer time.
Include praise, thanksgiving and singing as
well as petition. Spend some of your time
reflecting on the Scripture, meditating on it
and digesting its meaning. You may recall
that in seminar one I likened this to
"Chewing the Cud". Even a cursory glance
at a colourful flower garden will tell you
that God loves variety. Give it to Him in

your prayer time. Prayer should be varied just like any relationship. Sometimes it should be light. Sometimes it should be fun. Sometimes it will be deadly serious and tear-filled. However, it should always be specific and sincere.

Slide 30 - 17. Praying for others
(Intercessory prayer)
Just as we need to be specific when we confess our sin, we need to be specific in our praise and requests.
Instead of praying for your family in general, pray for each individual family member separately by name. Take the time to pray for each one to show your concern. Each is their own person with their own praises and needs for the future. Ask others what they would like you to pray for them. If you ask you will probably get a smile and a long list.

Lists available from the web-page: Praying Scripture: Prayers for our spouse: Eph.1:17–19; Ps. 15:1–2, 92:12–15. Prayers for our children: Col. 1:9–12; 2

Cor. 13:7–8; 1 Tim. 4:12, 6:11–12; 2 Tim. 2:22; Prov. 2:20.

Slide 31 - 18. praying with others (Communal prayer)
Pray with someone else. Though some prayers can only be said in solitude, there will be times when you'll want to join hearts with another person in prayer. If you commit to meet on a regular basis, the accountability can really help build consistency. Such prayer trysts can become powerful, life-changing events. Many times people have telephoned me with an issue and we have prayed together over the telephone.

Slide 32 - 19. Ask/listen 4 answers
The other day my eldest son had need of something and suffered all day because he did not have it. I had a spare of the very item that he wanted and when he finally told me about his situation, I asked, "Why didn't you contact me? You know that I have a spare and all you needed to do was ask and I

would give it to you." He said, "I don't like having to ask."

I replied, "Hey, I'm not a mind reader. If you want something, knowing I'm willing to give, ask!"

Now God is a mind reader, but he desires us to want, and so to ask. Jesus said in Matt. 7.7, "Ask and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." Also in Matt. 21.22, he said, "And, whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."

So ask. Then listen for how he will answer: yes, no, wait, here's something different or here's something better.

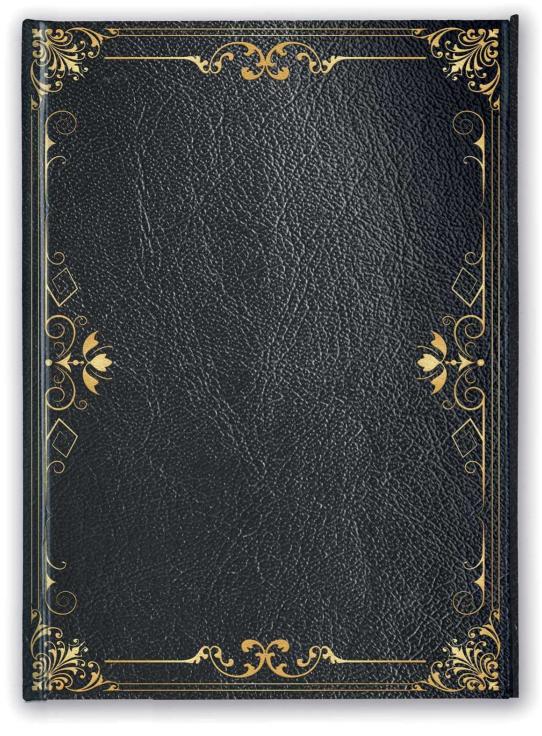
#### Slide 33 - 20. Be creative

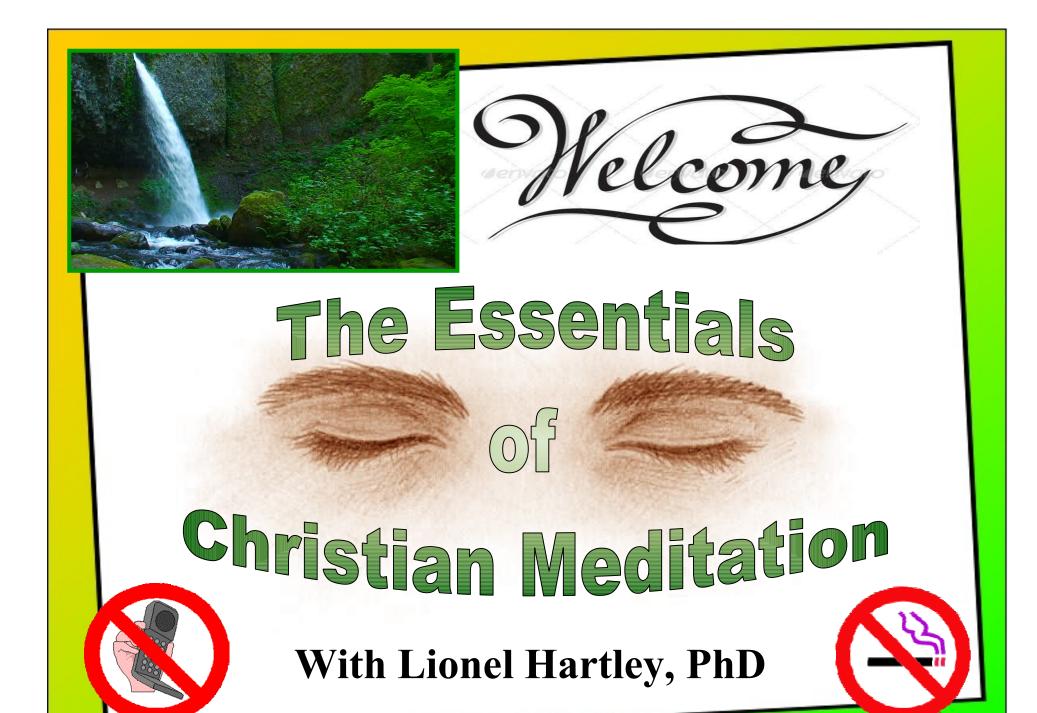
There are as many ways to pray as there are pray-ers. For example, if you are pressed for time or the thought of labouring over a topic wears you out, pray short, sincere one-sentence prayers instead. A sentence or two may be all that's needed to exhaust the topic for you for the time being. If so, just move

on to the next item without feeling guilty for your brevity. God knows. God cares.

Slide 34 - 21. don't give up

Question & Answer Session

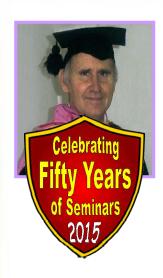




# The Essentials of

# Christian Meditation

# Who is your seminar author?



**Lionel Hartley**, author, radio broadcaster, public speaker and retired sociologist. He was a Lifestyle Educator and Family-life Counsellor for over three decades. He is a grandparent, married to Rosemary with three grown children.



Time will be allowed at the end for your questions.

Lionel D C Hartley, DipAdmin(NZIM), HonDip (DramArt), DipTheol (SDB), RGN (Psy, PsyPaed, Admin, Nutn), Dip Bus Law, Dip Econ, Dip Accy, BA (Lit), MA, PhD [etc.]

www.hartleyonline.blogspot.com

Topic and main title suggested by Joanna de Bruyn

# What is Meditation?



The Essentials of Christian Meditation - www.lrhartley.com/meditation

# What is Meditation?



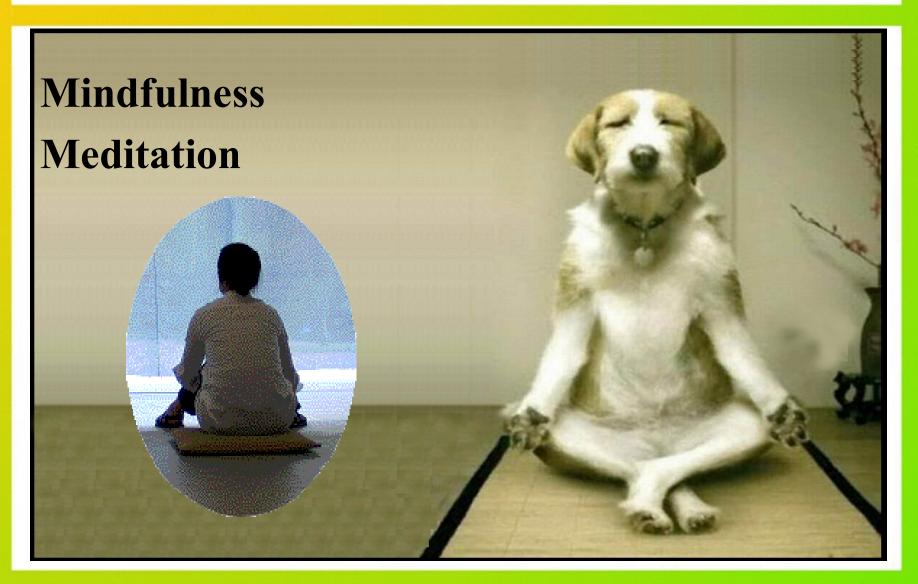
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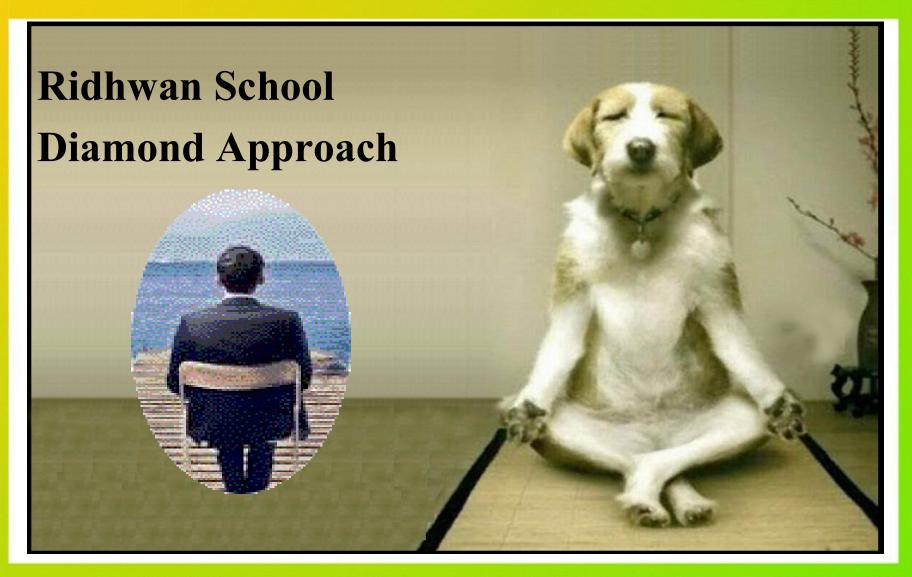
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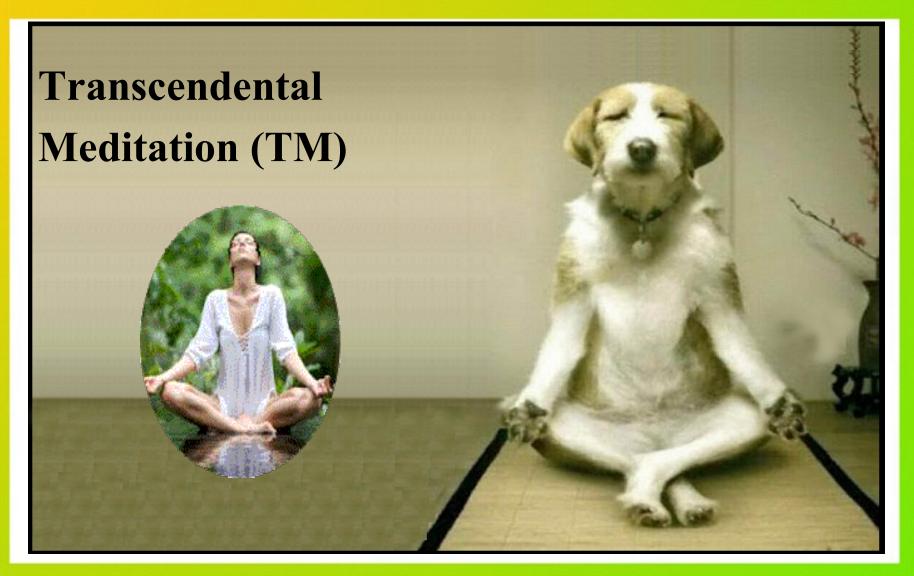


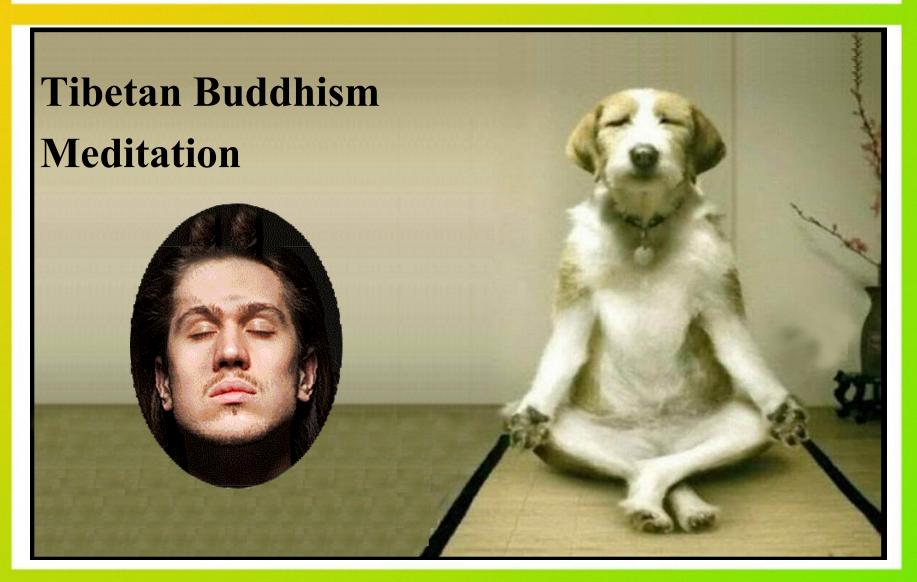
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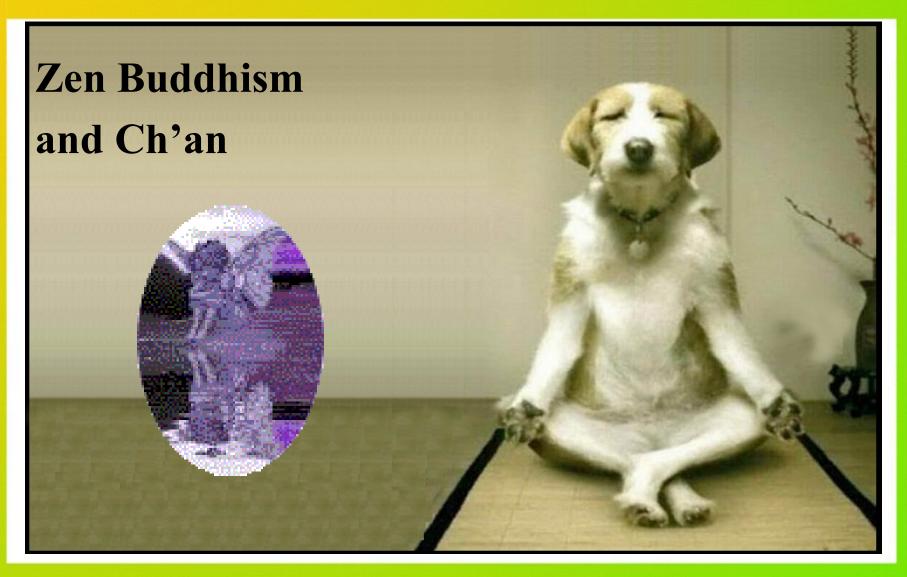




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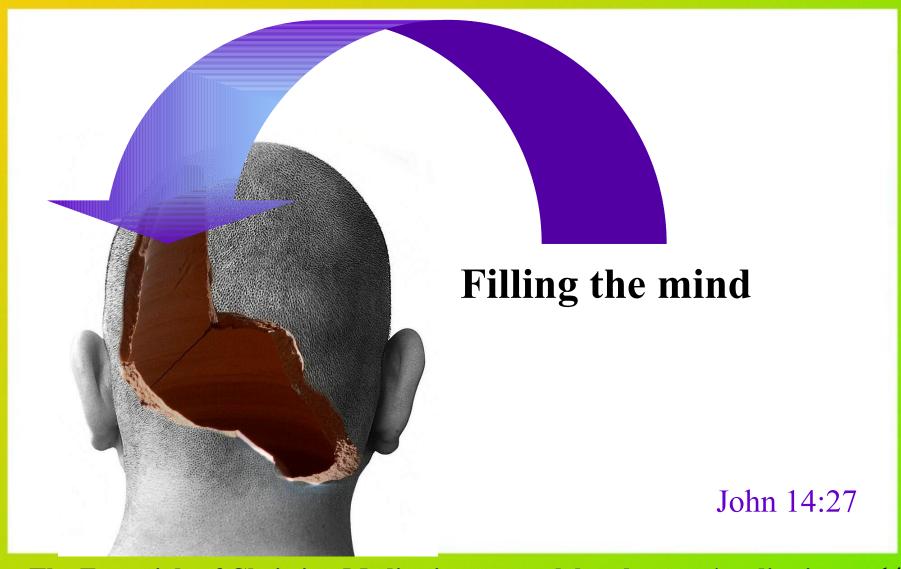


# What is Christian Meditation?

#### **Emptying the mind**



# What is Christian Meditation?





The Word of God



The Word of God

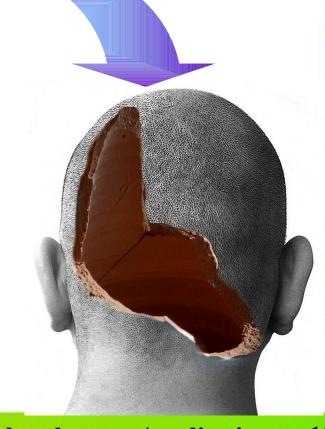
Psalm 119:97-99



The Word of God

Psalm 119:97-99

The works of God



The Word of God

Psalm 119:97-99

The works of God

Psalm 77:12; 145:5



The Word of God

Psalm 119:97-99

The works of God

Psalm 77:12; 145:5

Past experiences with the Lord



The Word of God

Psalm 119:97-99

The works of God

Psalm 77:12; 145:5

Past experiences with the Lord

Psalm 143:3-6



The Word of God

Psalm 119:97-99

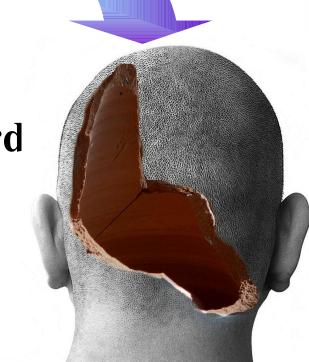
The works of God

Psalm 77:12; 145:5

Past experiences with the Lord

Psalm 143:3-6

The Lord Himself



The Word of God

Psalm 119:97-99

The works of God

Psalm 77:12; 145:5

Past experiences with the Lord

Psalm 143:3-6

The Lord Himself

Psalm 48:9; 104:34



#### Forms of Christian meditation

1. Meditating on God's love and His word

#### Forms of Christian meditation

- 1. Meditating on God's love and His word
- 2. Meditating on Nature & the God of Nature

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. ... When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet – all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! — Psalm 8

#### Forms of Christian meditation

- 1. Meditating on God's love and His word
- 2. Meditating on Nature & the God of Nature





The Essentials of Christian Meditation - www.lrhartley.com/meditation

#### Forms of Christian meditation

- 1. Meditating on God's love and His word
- 2. Meditating on Nature & the God of Nature
- 3. Meditating through prayer





# The practice of Christian meditation

When you're very busy and you've heaps of work to do

And when you're tired and can't see how you're going to get through,

Just stand quite still and tell yourself, that in those crowded hours

You will be given guidance, quiet strength and inner powers.



# The practice of Christian meditation

...You say you have no leisure time, but surely you can spare

A moment in the hectic day? You may be anywhere -

A shop, a street, an office - any place that you may be -

Just calm your worried, flurried thoughts, ...



#### The practice of Christian meditation

... and praying quietly...

You'll find new zest, new energy.

The will to start again -

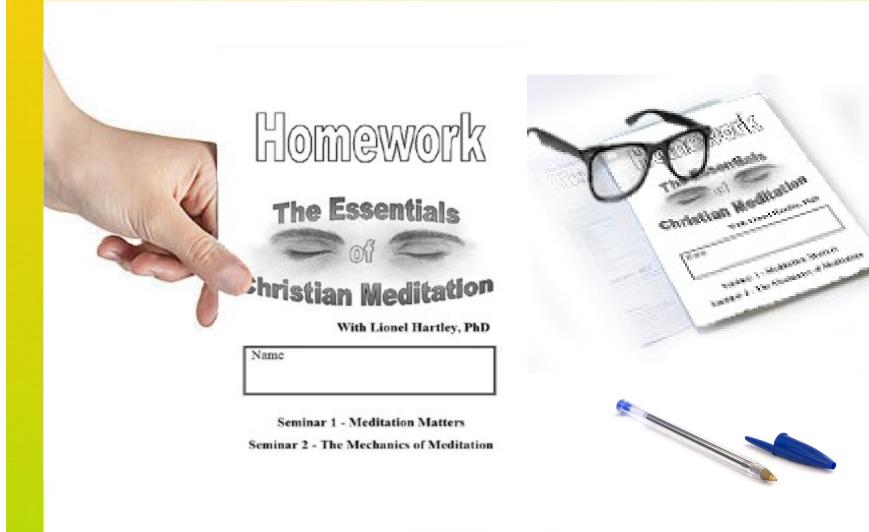
And you'll complete your daily work

Without the stress and strain.

Attributed to Patience Strong

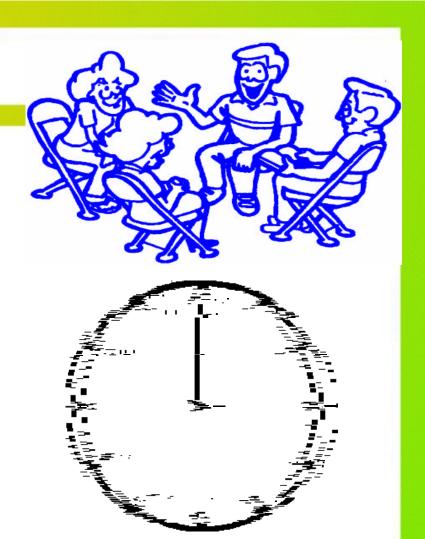


#### Homework



## **ACTS** Activity

- A Adoration
- **C** Confession
- T Thanksgiving
- **S** Supplication



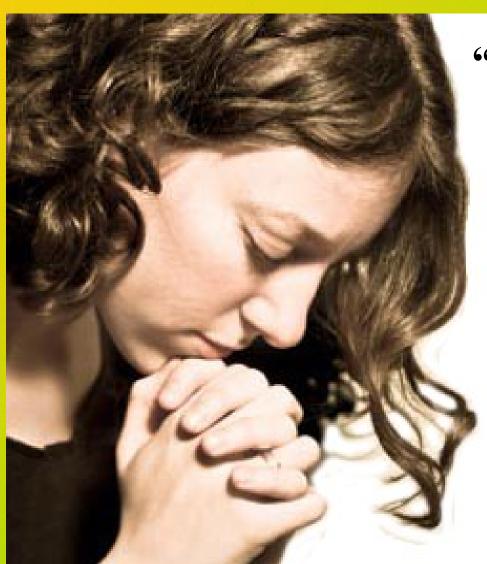
## **ACTS** Activity

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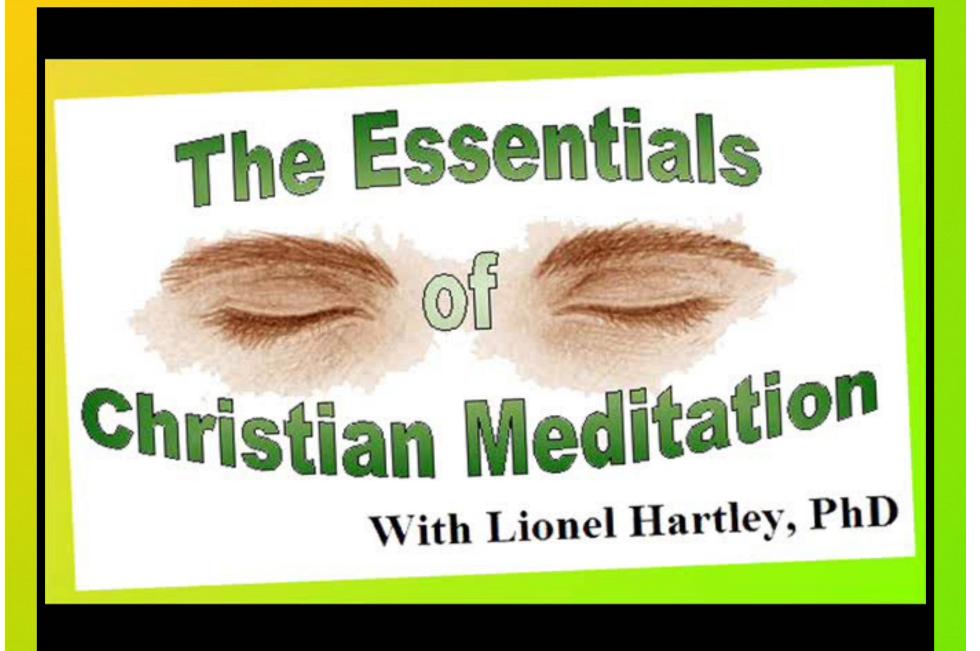


#### The benefits of Christian meditation



"It is well to meditate upon the things of God, because thus we get the real nutriment out of them."

- Charles H Spurgeon



#### Dangers of Christian meditation

1. Decontextualization — a text without context is a proof-text pretext.

- 2. Emptying mind
- 3. Unrealistic expectations

4. To other than God



He who formed our frame
Made man a perfect whole
And made the body's health
Depend upon the soul.

- Anon

**✓** Connection with our Creator

He who formed our frame Made man a perfect whole And made the body's health Depend upon the soul.

- Anon

26

- **✓** Connection with our Creator
- **✓** Peace

He who formed our frame
Made man a perfect whole
And made the body's health
Depend upon the soul.

Anon

26

- **✓** Connection with our Creator
- **✓** Peace
- **✓** Rest

He who formed our frame Made man a perfect whole And made the body's health Depend upon the soul.

Anon

- **✓** Connection with our Creator
- **✓** Peace
- ✓ Rest
- ✓ Inner joy

He who formed our frame Made man a perfect whole And made the body's health Depend upon the soul.

- Anon

26

- **✓** Connection with our Creator
- **✓** Peace
- **✓** Rest
- ✓ Inner joy
- **✓** Reassurance

He who formed our frame Made man a perfect whole And made the body's health Depend upon the soul.

Anon

26

- **✓** Connection with our Creator
- **✓** Peace
- **✓** Rest
- ✓ Inner joy
- **✓** Reassurance
- **✓** Hope

He who formed our frame Made man a perfect whole And made the body's health Depend upon the soul.

Anon

- **✓** Connection with our Creator
- **✓** Peace
- **✓** Rest
- ✓ Inner joy
- **✓** Reassurance
- **✓** Hope
- ✓ Solutions to life's problems

He who formed our frame Made man a perfect whole And made the body's health Depend upon the soul.

Anon

26

- **✓** Connection with our Creator
- **✓** Peace
- **✓** Rest
- ✓ Inner joy
- **✓** Reassurance
- **✓** Hope
- ✓ Solutions to life's problems
- **✓** Healing, health and relaxation

He who formed our frame Made man a perfect whole And made the body's health Depend upon the soul.

Anon

26

#### Next time:



#### **Seminar 2: The Mechanics of Meditation**

(The How, Where & When of meditation)

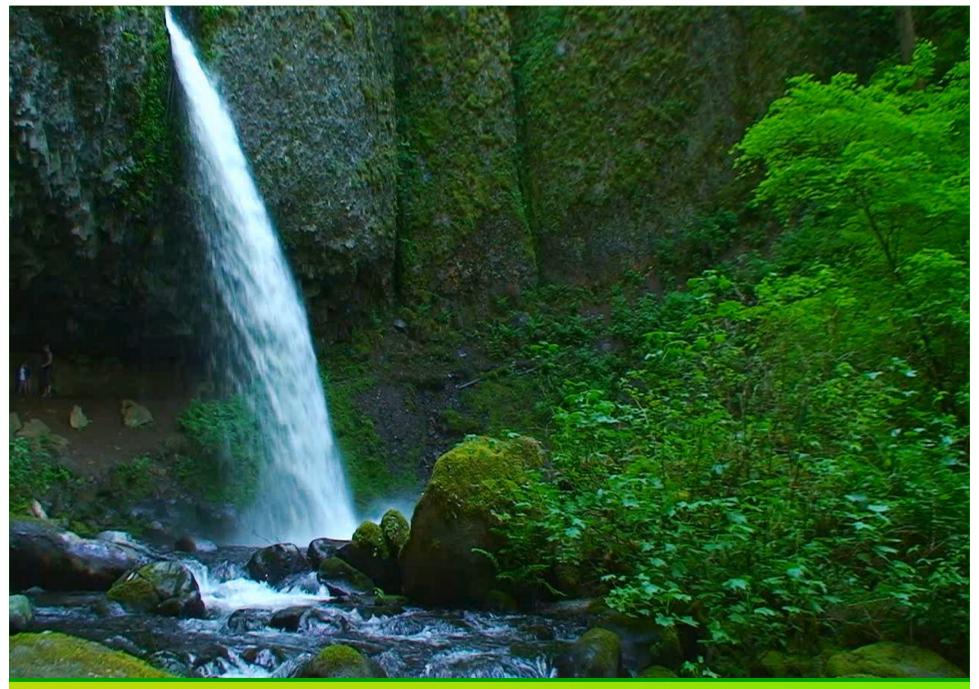
- 1. Review: Meditation is not what you think!
- 2. Meditation Positions and Postures
- 3. Meditation Places
- 4. Meditation Times and Seasons
- 5. Meditation and Relaxation
- 6. Meditation Resources
- 7. Question & Answer Session



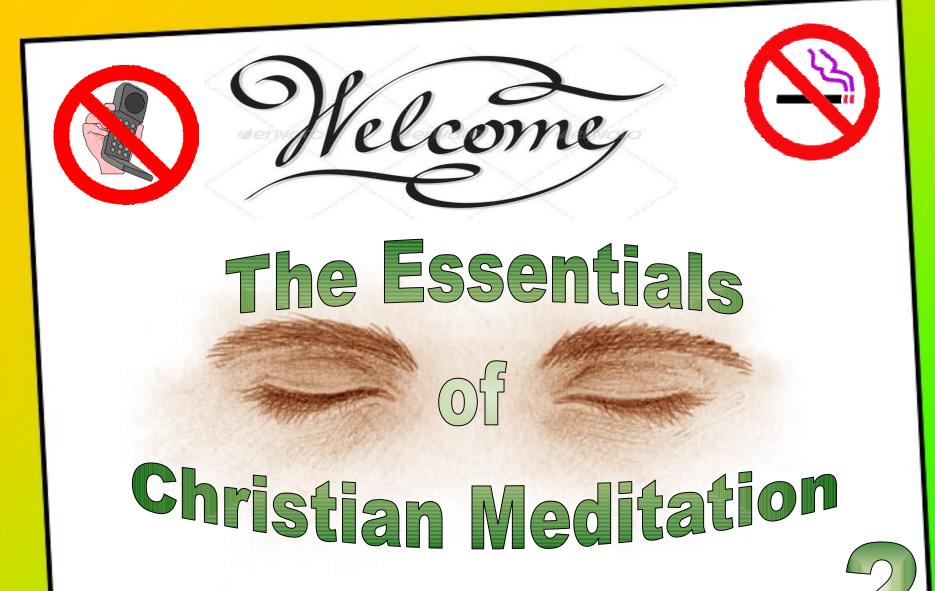
8 March 2015







The Essentials of Christian Meditation - www.lrhartley.com/meditation



With Lionel Hartley, PhD

## The Essentials of

# ristian Medital

## Who is your seminar author?



Lionel Hartley, author, radio broadcaster, public speaker and retired sociologist. He was a Lifestyle Educator and Family-life Counsellor for over three decades. He is a grandparent, married to Rosemary with three grown children.



Time will be allowed at the end for your questions.

Lionel D C Hartley, DipAdmin(NZIM), HonDip (DramArt), DipTheol (SDB), RGN (Psy, PsyPaed, Admin, Nutn), Dip Bus Law, Dip Econ, Dip Accy, BA (Lit), MA, PhD [etc.]

www.hartleyonline.blogspot.com

Topic and main title suggested by Joanna de Bruyn

## 1. Stop





#### 2. Reflect



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#### Seminar 2 — Forgiveness



## Forgiveness is ...

People, upon rationally determining that they have been unfairly treated, forgive when they wilfully abandon resentment and related responses (to which they have a right), and endeavour to respond to the wrongdoer based on the moral principle of beneficence, which may include compassion, unconditional worth, generosity, and moral love (to which the wrongdoer, by nature of the hurtful act or acts, has no right)

- Enright & Fitzgibbons, American Psychological Association Research Brief: Forgiveness, 2000

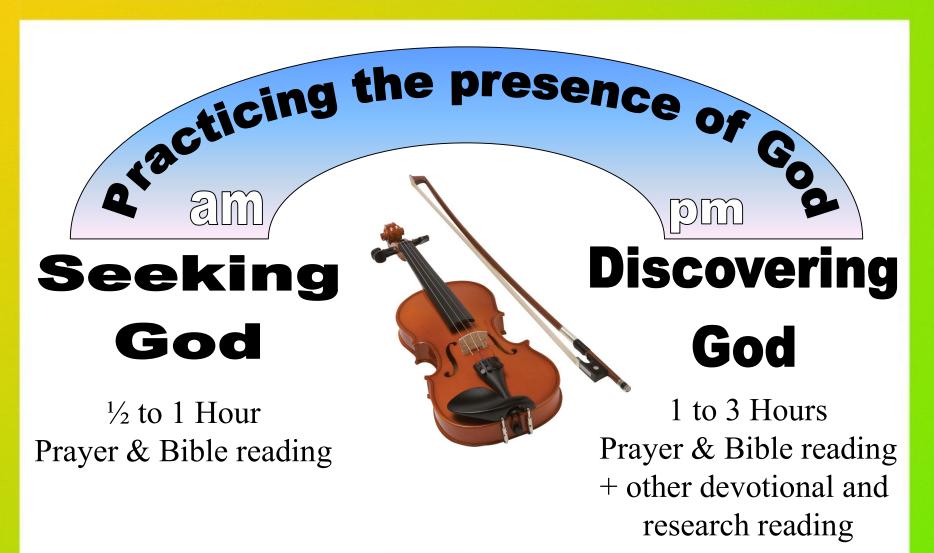
## Forgiveness is not ...

- Pardon, legal mercy or leniency
- Condoning or excusing
- Reconciliation (you can come together again, but still not forgive)
- Justification (you can forgive, but don't have to believe their action was fair)
- Forgetting (forgetting would leave you vulnerable to the offence again)

## 4. Be honest to God and yourself



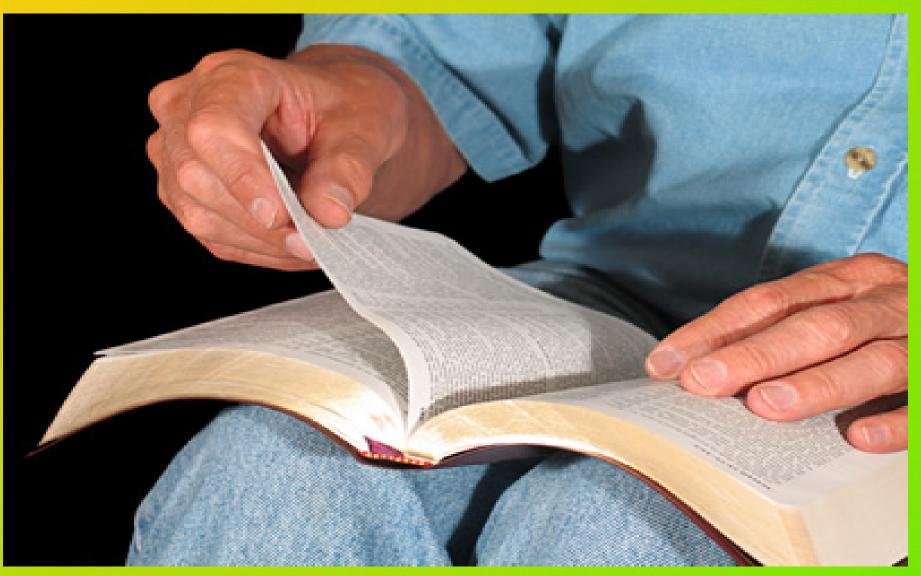
## 5. Start early



#### 6. Confess



## 7. Respond

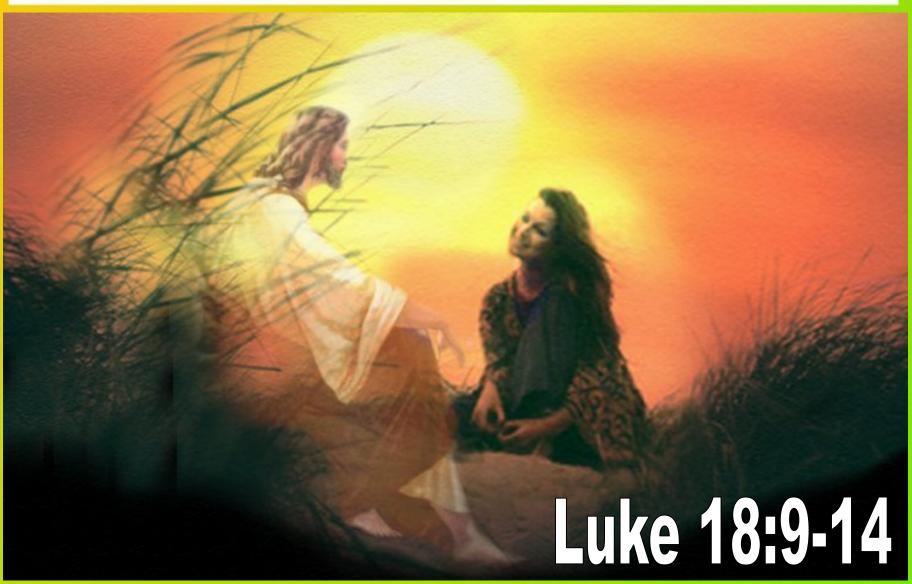


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## 8. Pray with faith



#### 9. Talk with God



## 10. Pray out loud



# 11. Posture matters

## POSTURES IN PRAYER

Standing — 1 Kings 8:22; Mark 11:25

Bowing down — Psalms 95:6

Kneeling — 2 Chronicles 6:13; Psalms 95:6;

Luke 22:41; Acts 20:36

Falling on the face — Numbers 16:22; Joshua

5:14; 1 Chronicles 21:16; Matthew 26:39

Spreading forth the hands — Isaiah 1:15

Lifting up the hands — Psalms 28:2; Lamenta-

tions 2:19; 1 Timothy 2:8

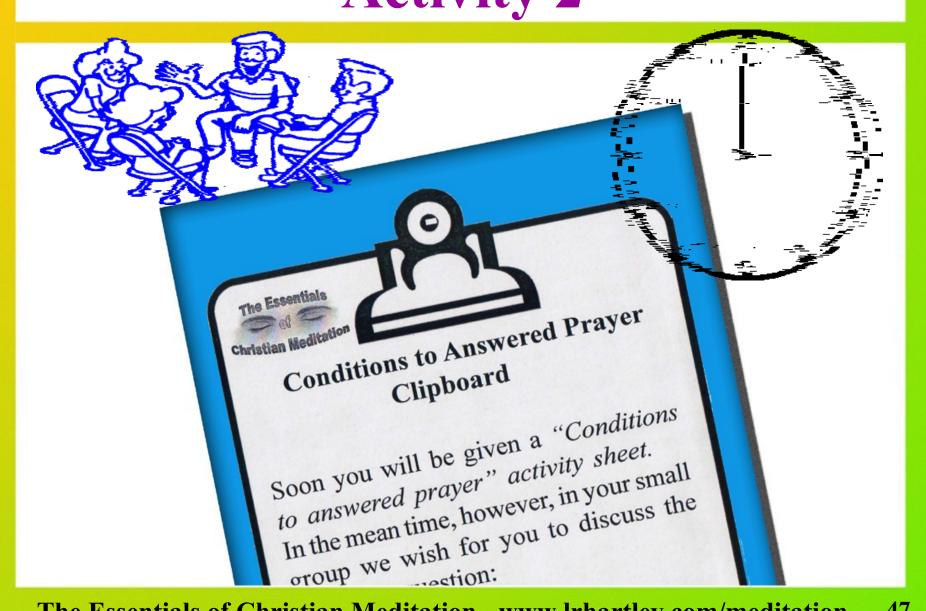
(From the *Prayer Resource Manual* – downloadable from the website below)

# 2. Make a prayer guide

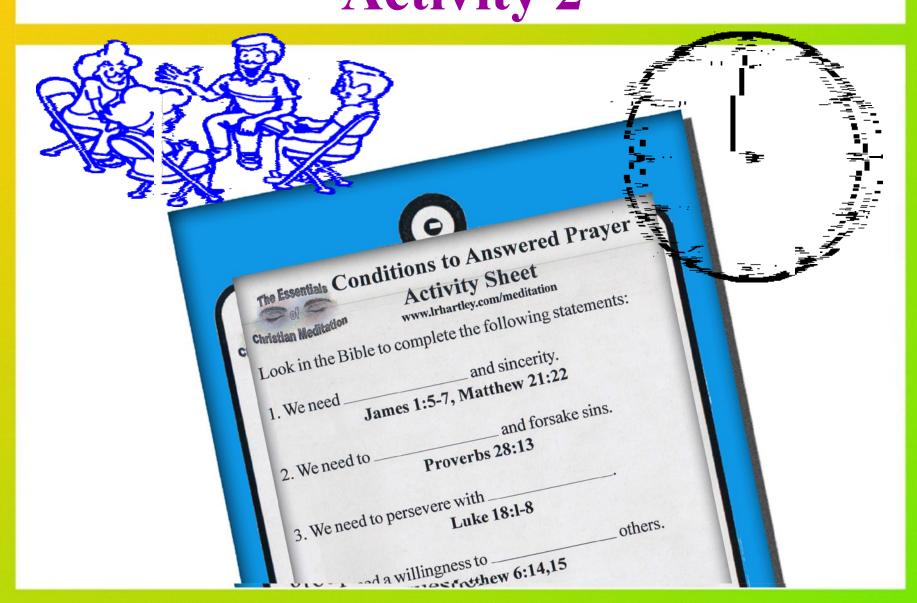
# 13. Keep a prayer journal



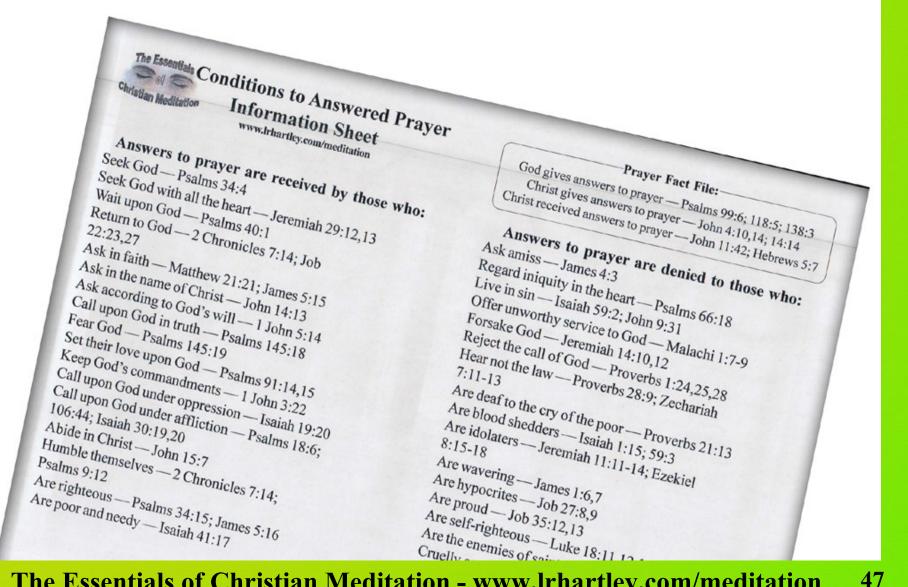
# Activity 2



# Activity 2



# Activity 2



# 14. Timed / trigger moments



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# 15. Time & place

A field (Genesis 24:63); a place of worship (Psalm 48:9); in bed (Psalm 63:6); etc.

## TIMES OF PRAYER

#### AS RECORDED IN THE BIBLE:

Three times a day - Daniel 6:10

Evening, Morning and Noonday - Psalm 55:7

Seven times a day - Psalm 119:164

Morning - Mark 1:35

At the Morning Watch - Psalm 63:6

At the Third Hour (of the day) - Acts 2:15

At the Sixth Hour (of the day) - Acts 10:9

At the Third Hour (of the day, the Hour of

Prayer) - Acts 3:1

At eventide - Genesis 24:63

At night - Psalm 134:1

At midnight - Psalm 119:62

Although early seekers make certain finders, I guess the

## PLACES OF PRAYER

#### AS RECORDED IN THE BIBLE:

In the closet - Matthew 6:6

In the Upper Room - Acts 1:13

On the housetop - Acts 10:9

In the Temple - Acts 3:1

On the Seashore - Acts 21:5

In the garden - John 18:1

In the desert - Mark 1:35

In the worst imaginable place - Jonah 2:1

Among the faithful / in the congregation

In bed - Psalm 149:5

Psalm 111:1

And if that hasn't left out where you may pray:

"Pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands,

" - I Timothy 2:8

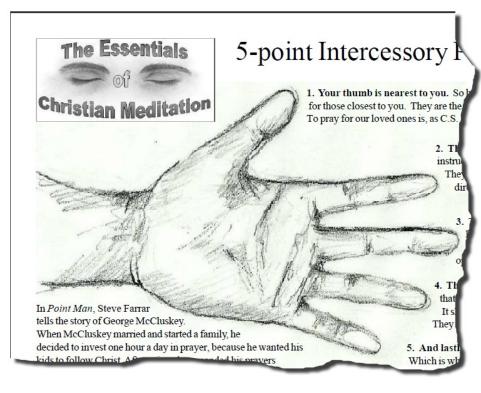
Hartley

# 16. Change pace



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# 17. Praying for others



Prayers for our spouse:

Eph.1:17-19;

Ps. 15:1–2,

92:12-15

Prayers for our children: Col. 1:9–12; 2 Cor. 13:7–8; 1 Tim. 4:12, 6:11–12; 2 Tim. 2:22; Prov. 2:20

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# 18. Praying with others



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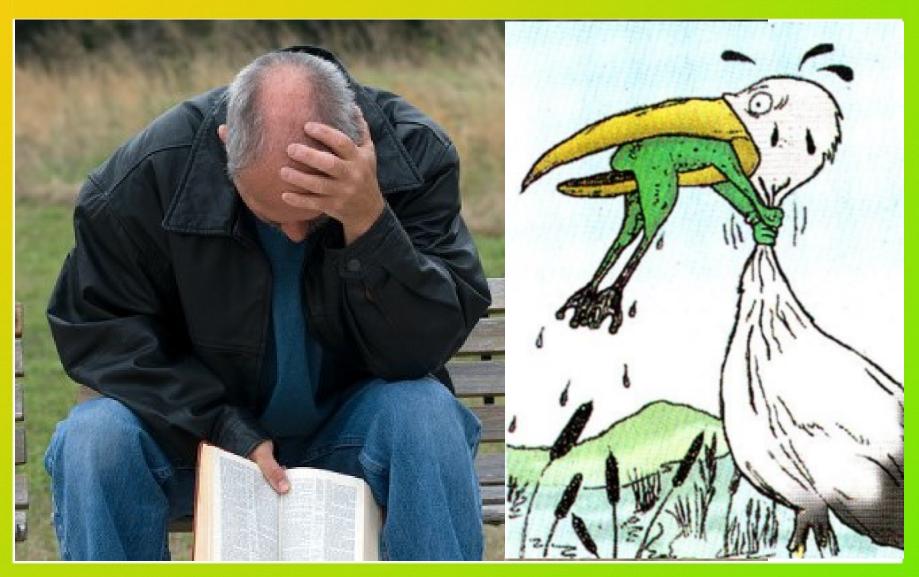
# 19. Ask; Listen for answers



# 20. Be creative



# 22. Don't give up



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## Ecclesiastes 9:5

## Parallel Verses

#### New International Version

For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even their name is forgotten.

## **New Living Translation**

The living at least know they will die, but the dead know nothing. They have no further reward, nor are they remembered.

## **English Standard Version**

For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward, for the memory of them is forgotten.

## Context

#### Death Comes to Good and Bad

... 4 For whoever is joined with all the living, there is hope; surely a live dog is better than a dead lion. 5 For the living know they will die; but the dead do not know anything, nor have they any longer a reward, for their memory is forgotten. 6 Indeed their love, their hate and their zeal have already perished, and they will no longer have a share in all that is done under the sun.

## Meditation

#### Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary

- 1. (n.) Close or continued thought; serious contemplation; reflection; musing; the turning or revolving of a subject in the mind.
- 2. (n.) Thought; -- without regard to kind.

#### International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

#### MEDITATION

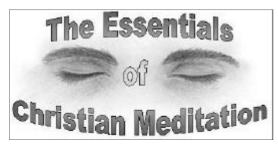
med-i-ta'-shun (haghuth, sichah): "Meditation" is the translation of haghuth, from haghah, "to murmur," "to have a deep tone," hence, "to meditate" (Psalm 49:3); of haghigh, "sighing," "moaning" (Psalm 5:1; see Psalm 5:2); of higgayon, "the murmur" or dull sound of the harp, hence, meditation (Psalm 19:14, "Let.... the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight"); of siach, "speech," "meditation" (Psalm 104:34, "Let my meditation be sweet unto him"); of sichah, a "bowing down," "musing" (Psalm 119:97, 99; 2Es 10:5). "To meditate" is the translation of haghah (Joshua 1:8 Psalm 1:2; Psalm 63:6 Isaiah 33:18 the King James Version); of suach (Genesis 24:63); of siach (Psalm 119:15, 23, etc.; Psalm 143:5, the King James Version "muse"; 1 Chronicles 16:9 Psalm 105:2 margin). In Apocrypha we have "to meditate" (Ecclesiasticus 14:20, "Blessed is the man that shall mediate in wisdom," the Revised Version margin "most authorities read come to an end" (teleutesei); Ecclesiasticus 39:1, "meditateth in the law of the Most High" (dianoeomai)). The lack of meditation is a great want in our modern religious life. In the New Testament, we have "to meditate" (promeletao, "to take care beforehand"), Luke 21:14, and "meditate" (meletao, "to take care"), 1 Timothy 4:15 the King James Version (the Revised Version (British and American) "be diligent"); compare Philippians 4:8 Colossians 3:2.

# The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer Dur Father, who art in heaven, Sallowed be thy Ylame. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Adoration Supplication for *universal* need **Thanksgiving** Supplication for *physical* need **Confession** Supplication for spiritual need Adoration **Affirmation** 







# **Seminar 1 Activity**

The acrostic ACTS:				
A	Praising God's attributes and character			
C	Admitting our sins and asking for forgiveness			
Т				
<u>,</u>	- Showing gratitude for the blessings we have received from Him			
<u> </u>	- Petitions for the blessings we need.			
Elements of effective r	orayer in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)			
-	d to: 'Our Father which art in heaven' (Vs 9a)			
Starts with our	: 'Hallowed be thy name' (Vs 9b)			
Followed by our	_ for <i>universal</i> need: 'Thy kingdom come' (Vs 10a)			
Followed by our	: 'Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven' (Vs 10b)			
•	for physical need: 'Give us this day our daily bread'			
(Vs11)	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
12)	: 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors' (Vs			
,	for <i>spiritual</i> need: 'Lead us not into temptation, but			
deliver us from evil' (Vs 13a)				
Finishes with our	: 'For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the			
glory' (Vs 13b) Affinmati	ion			
Finalised by our Affirmation	: Amen (So be it!)			
Write your own personal four-line	prayer using these four attributes:			
	$ \qquad \qquad (A) $			
	$\begin{array}{c} & & \\$			
	(S)			
Amen.				

# A Teenage Triumph



**Karen Johnson's final high school paper** revealed her love for God the day before she was killed.

Chicago teen Karen Johnson handed her school assignment to her teacher at San Marino High School on Friday June 5, 1959. She titled it "My Philosophy of Life". In her paper, 17-year-old Karen expressed her unswerving faith and love for God, the Bible, and Jesus Christ. Next day, a car crash took her life away. Since her school and parents made Karen's paper public, many people have admitted they came to know Christ because of it. Some young men went into Christian ministry because of it. Here is Karen's paper.

My Philosophy of Life
by Karen Ruth Johnson

My philosophy of life is based on the Holy Bible and the God who wrote it. I know that He has a plan for my life and through daily prayer and reading of His Word I will be able to see it. As far as my life work or life partner, I am leaving it in His hands and am willing to do anything He says.

I feel that this philosophy is very practical and can be applied to everyday life. Every decision can be taken to the Lord in prayer and the peace that comes from knowing Jesus Christ as my personal Savior is something many cannot understand. Many search for a purpose and reason for life. I know that I am on this earth to have fellowship with God and to win others to the saving knowledge of His Son, Jesus Christ. I know that after death I will go to be with Him forever.

Jesus Christ teaches love and respect for everyone through the New Testament and we are not to judge anyone because He will on the judgment day. In God's sight no one person is worth more than another.

Knowing and loving Jesus Christ personally makes me want to please Him and accomplish things for His Glory. Paul says in the New Testament, "Whatsoever ye do, do it all to the glory of God" and "For me, to live is Christ, to die is gain".

This philosophy contains all of the seven points given in your lecture of April 20th. As I stated in the

beginning, it is very

- 1. practical to have someone to turn to for any decision or problem, small or large.
- 2. What could be more optimistic than knowing that God has a purpose and plan for one's life and is willing to keep in constant fellowship with anyone who will. To know I have accepted Jesus Christ's gift of Salvation and will have eternal life in Heaven is a most wonderful thing and brings peace to my heart. God has the best for us and if we let Him He will improve our lives and solve our problems.
- 3. God in His Holy Word teaches us to have love and a burden for every person as Jesus Christ Himself.
- 4. One of my main purposes in life is to share this experience I have had with Christ and to show them the peace and happiness that it brings.
- 5. This is an important goal in itself, but more completely, my aim in life is to accomplish what the Lord has for me to do, which is certainly the most worthwhile goal in life.
- 6. The closer I grow to Him the more happiness I find and the busier I am. He has things for me that the world could never offer and I learn to appreciate more and more how fortunate I am.
- 7. God's standards are higher than anything attainable, and present a great challenge and make me realize how futile it would be for me to do the best I could, because I, being human, could never reach God's standards, and therefore never be worthy of entering Heaven. God has given me contact with the best; in His world, in my born-again friends, and in my fellowship with Jesus Christ. It is well known that the highest beauty, truth, justice, and goodness is found in God's Word.

This is my philosophy, yet it is not mine, but I am God's, and whatever I have is His and I have faith that He is the only answer and I love Him so.

From More Than Conquerors, edited by John Woodbridge, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1992.

# TIMES OF PRAYER

## AS RECORDED IN THE BIBLE:

Three times a day - Daniel 6:10

Evening, Morning and Noonday - Psalm 55:7

Seven times a day - Psalm 119:164

Morning - Mark 1:35

At the Morning Watch - Psalm 63:6

At the Third Hour (of the day) - Acts 2:15

At the Sixth Hour (of the day) - Acts 10:9

At the Third Hour (of the day, the Hour of

Prayer) - Acts 3:1

At eventide - Genesis 24:63

At night - Psalm 134:1

At midnight - Psalm 119:62

Although early seekers make certain finders, I guess the moral is summed up in the following references:

At all times - Ephesians 6:18

Always - Luke 18:1 and

Without ceasing - I Thessalonians 5:17,

- I Samuel 12:23

# PLACES OF PRAYER

### AS RECORDED IN THE BIBLE:

In the closet - Matthew 6:6

In the Upper Room - Acts 1:13

On the housetop - Acts 10:9

In the Temple - Acts 3:1

On the Seashore - Acts 21:5

In the garden - John 18:1

In the desert - Mark 1:35

In the worst imaginable place - Jonah 2:1

Among the faithful / in the congregation

In bed - Psalm 149:5

And if that hasn't left out where you may pray:

"Pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands,

without wrath and doubting." - I Timothy 2:8

- Lionel Hartley,

Psalm 111:1

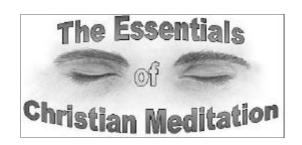
The Practice of Prayer, 1987.







# Meditating on Nature and the God of Nature



# We can learn much about God by considering the works of His hands.

Nature highlights a number of God's attributes—His character traits.

Notice His attributes in the following:

# (1) Nature witnesses to God's invisible attributes of eternal power and divine nature.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:18-20). See also Psalm 114:1-8

## (2) Nature witnesses to God's grace.

But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous (Matthew 5:44-45).

# (3) Nature witnesses to God's faithfulness in caring for His creatures.

And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into

the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith? Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?' For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things (Matthew 6:28-32).

# (4) Nature reveals God's infinite knowledge.

Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore do not fear; you are of more value than many sparrows (Matthew 10:29-31).

#### (5) Nature reveals God's infinite wisdom.

In Proverbs, wisdom speaks, as one present and involved at the creation of the world. The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, Before His works of old. From everlasting I was established, From the beginning, from the earliest times of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, When there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, Before the hills I was brought forth; While He had not yet made the earth and the fields, Nor the first dust of the world. When He established the heavens, I was there, When He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep, When He made firm the skies above, When the springs of the deep became fixed, When He set for the sea its boundary, So that the water should not transgress His command, When He marked out the foundations of the earth; Then I was beside Him, as a master workman; And I was daily His delight, Rejoicing always before Him, Rejoicing in the world, His earth, And having my delight in the sons of men (Proverbs 8:22-31).

#### (6) Nature reveals God's holiness.

When God delivered His law to the people of Israel from Mt. Sinai, the forces of nature were present to bear witness to the holiness of the One speaking:

So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. And the Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up (Exodus 19:16-20; see 20:18).

#### (7) Nature reveals God's glory.

In Psalm 19, David praises God for the two forms of revelation known to him--nature (verses 1-6) and biblical revelation, the Law (verses 7-14). David writes that nature continues to reveal the glory of God to men: The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. there is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances

to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; It rejoices as a strong man to run his course. Its rising is from one end of the heavens, And its circuit to the other end of them; And there is nothing hidden from its heat (Psalm 19:1-6). See also Psalm 8:3-9

(8) Nature reveals God's righteousness. The Mighty One, God, the Lord, has spoken, And summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shone forth. May our God come and not keep silence; Fire devours before Him, And it is very tempestuous around Him. He summons the heavens above, And the earth, to judge His people: "Gather My godly ones to Me, Those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." And the heavens declare His righteousness, For God Himself is judge (Psalm 50:1-6). See also Psalm 97:1-6

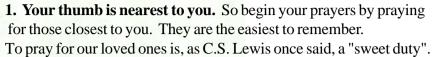
# (9) Nature reveals a certain standard of conduct.

The expression "contrary to nature" or "unnatural" can be used to describe not only fallen man's worship but also his behaviour: For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:18-20).

Nature demonstrates a standard of conduct which sinful men violate. Romans1:21-27 goes on to describe idolatry and sexual misconduct as unnatural (against nature).

# The Essentials 5-point Intercessory Prayer

www.lrhartley.com/meditation



2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers.

They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.

**3.** The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the prime minister, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.

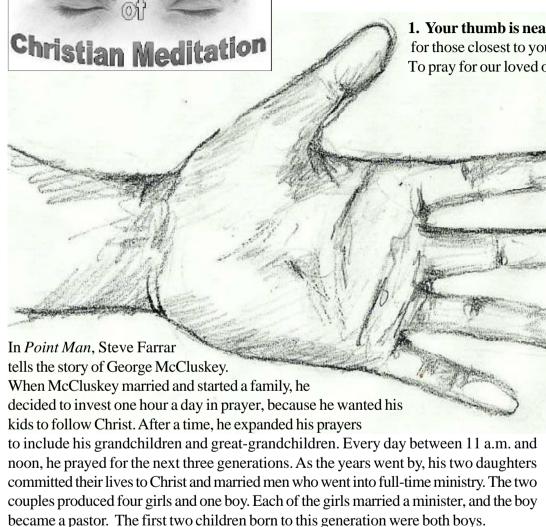
4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.

5. And lastly comes our little finger; the smallest finger of all.

Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "the least shall be the greatest among you" (Luke 9:48). Your pinky should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

"Oh, I wish that God had not given me what I prayed for! It was not so good as I thought."

— Heidi (Johanna Spyri, Heidi)



Upon graduation from high school, the two cousins chose the same college and became

roommates. During their sophomore year, one boy decided to go into the ministry. The

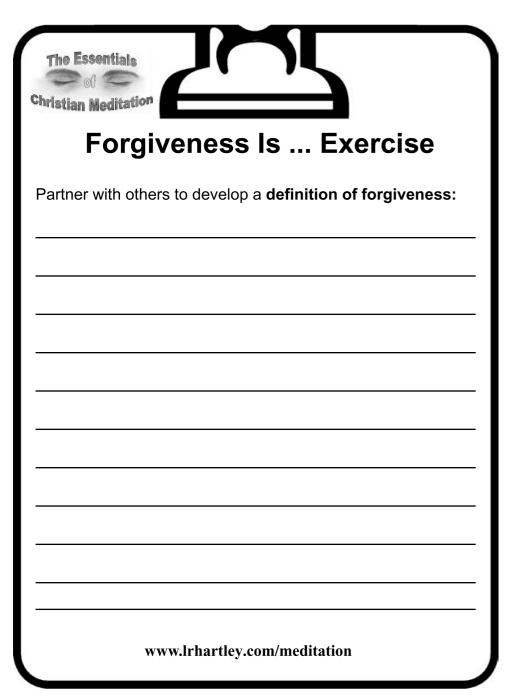
other didn't. He undoubtedly felt some pressure to continue the family legacy, but he chose

instead to pursue his interest in psychology. He earned his doctorate and eventually wrote books for parents that became bestsellers. He started a radio program heard on more than

a thousand stations each day. The man's name was James Dobson.

Through his prayers, George McCluskey affected far more than one family.

Trim page in two lengthwise, and then trim this half close to the line below, before attaching it to the laminated Clipboard with a sticky dot in the top centre.



## **Seminar 2** — Forgiveness



# Forgiveness is ...

People, upon rationally determining that they have been unfairly treated, forgive when they wilfully abandon resentment and related responses (to which they have a right), and endeavour to respond to the wrongdoer based on the moral principle of beneficence, which may include compassion, unconditional worth, generosity, and moral love (to which the wrongdoer, by nature of the hurtful act or acts, has no right)

— Enright & Fitzgibbons, American Psychological Association Research Brief: Forgiveness, 2000

# Forgiveness is not ...

- Pardon, legal mercy or leniency
- Condoning or excusing
- · Reconciliation (you can come together again, but still not forgive)
- Justification (you can forgive, but don't have to believe their action was fair)
- Forgetting (forgetting would leave you vulnerable to the offence again)
- · Balancing scales (getting back at someone is not the same as forgiving)
- · Letting time heal the wound (forgiving is active rather than passive)
- · Abandoning resentment (we might let go of resentment but still not forgive
- Possessing positive feelings (we might feel positive towards an individual, but still not forgiven them)
- · Saying "I forgive you" (you can forgive without using specific words)
- Making a decision to forgive (it can involve a decision, but forgiveness is a process which takes time)
- A quick fix (forgiveness takes time, and progress may fluctuate)
- Accepting what happened (we could accept the facts of an event but not forgive, accepting may be a part of forgiveness but not all acceptance is forgiveness)
- Moving on (we may decide to move on without looking back, and without forgiving)
- Accepting what happened knowing that God will punish them (this approach focuses more on justice than forgiveness)
- · Saying "I have the satisfaction of not letting the person get to me"
- "Letting the other person know how much they owe me" (this is a form of revenge, and is using the misdeed/transgression as a weapon)

Seminar: *The Essentials of Christian Meditation* **www.lrhartley.com/meditation** (Lionel Hartley, PhD)





## The Prayer Of Faith:

The General Epistle of James, Chapter 5:

- 13 Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms.
- 14 Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:
- 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.
- 16 Confess your faults to one another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
- 17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed ernestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by space of three years and six months.
- 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit

## Seven aspects to prayer in this passage:

- 1. Individual prayer (Let him pray.) vs 13 Begin with your own petition / Psalm 30:2; 147:3
- 2. United prayer (let them pray) vs 14 Invite others to pray / II Chronicles 7:14,15
- 3. Believing prayer (the prayer of faith shall save the sick) vs 16— The disciples were unable to heal a lunatic because of their unbelief according to Jesus (Matthew 17:14-21)
- 4. Intercessory prayer (pray for one another ) vs 16 / Job 42:10
- 5. Effectual prayer (effectual fervent prayer) vs 16 / "effectual" a legel term for "...with power"
- 6. Definite, specific prayer (Elias... prayed emestly that it might not rain) vs 17
- 7. Repeated prayer (And he prayed again) vs 18

#### Seven critiques for modern so-called "faith healing":

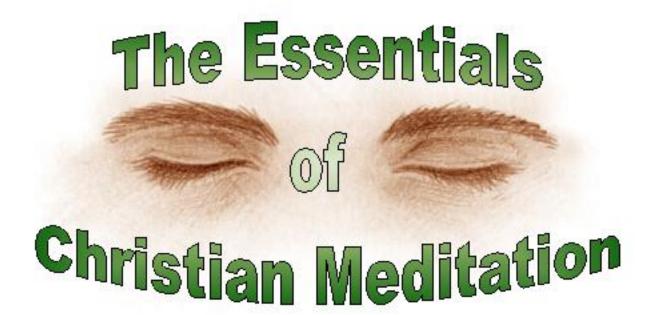
"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil..." vs 14

- 1. Selective healings in which the applicants are screened before they are allowed into the service
- 2. Chicanery simple trickery on the part of the faith healers
- 3. Undocumented, doubtful or demonstrably false claims
- 4. Spontaneous remission of the disease due to natural processes and not the power of the faith healer
- 5. Remission due to medical or surgical intervention
- 6. Miracles by Satan Revelation 16:4
- 7. Healing which comes as a result of faith in God and not in the faith healer.

(And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up) vs 15 (Give God the credit... Psalm 115:1 says, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.")

LDCH "87

# Homework



With Lionel Hartley, PhD

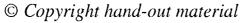
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Seminar 1 - Meditation Matters

Seminar 2 - The Mechanics of Meditation



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## Homework Sheet: "CONDITIONS TO ANSWERED PRAYER"

God is always listening, therefore we can always pray to Him:

"I love the Lord because The hears my prayers and answers them. Because he bends down and listens, I will pray as long as I breathe!" Psalm 116:1,2 (Living Bible)

#### These are the conditions to answered prayer:

1.	F and sincerity.		Matthew 21:22
2.	C and forsake	sins.	Proverbs 28:13
3.	Persevere with G	e 18:1-8 ("Goo	od News" Bible)
4.	Willingness to f	others. N	Matthew 6:14,15
5.	P for others.	Matthew	5:44, Job 42:10
6.	Pray without ishnes	ss or envy.	James 4:3,5
7.	Pray according to's wi		hew 26:39,42,44
8.	Pray in's name.		John 14:13.14

Example: 1 Kings 17:17-24

"Prayer depends, not on talent, learning, rank, wealth, or office, but on the character of the [person] who prays. S/he is not free of all mistakes for even Elijah ... was not perfect. But s/he is 'righteous' in that s/he does not cling to known sin.... S/he is 'righteous' in that s/he is in active fellowship and communion with God, even as Elijah was."

Selected

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Information Sheet: Conditions to Answered Prayer, Continued ...

5. You must **pray for others.** In the "Sermon on the Mount", Jesus said... "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' <u>But I say</u> to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and **pray for those** who spitefully use you and persecute you..." Matthew 5:44,

Remember the trauma that Job suffered? In the last chapter of the book of Job we read of the turning point in Job's life...

And the Lord restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. Job 42:10

6. You must pray without selfishness or envy.

You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. ... Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? James 4:3,5

If you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast.... For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing will be there. James 3:14, 16

Therefore, [lay] aside all... envy. 1 Peter 2:1

7. You must pray according to God's will. We read that when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane...

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." ... He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done." ... So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Matthew 26:39,42,44

And as Jesus said in what has become known as "The Lord's Prayer", or "The Believer's Prayer"...

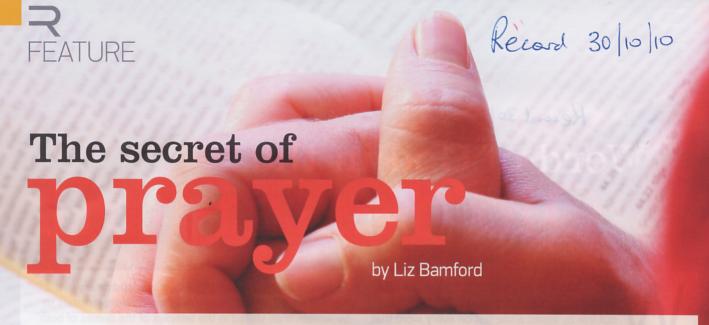
"In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. ..."

Matthew 6:10

8. You must pray in Jesus' name.

"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

John 14:13,14



OW CAN I HAVE A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH Christ?" This question has been emailed to me more than any other question. The Christian journey from mediocrity to a peace-filled relationship with Christ has often seemed elusive. Fourteen years ago I became weary of living the external Christian life. I was exhausted, seeking but not finding. I began a biblical search that changed my prayer life forever. I discovered the Bible is the secret to the first step in experiencing the presence of God working in my life through prayer.

Jesus says, "Seek and you shall find". According to the Scriptures, finding involves "walking in the Spirit", having the "kingdom of God within", experiencing the "peace that passes all understanding", through prayer, and my body becomes the "temple of the Holy Spirit". Finding also means that when I pray in Christ's name my prayers will be answered. So why wasn't this happening in my life? Clearly I had not come to the place of finding; I was still seeking.

At a work field day I was introduced to a tall, handsome man. He was busy signing cricket bats. Obviously he was a well-know identity. But who was he? My mind attempted to search for some piece of information that would give me a clue. This man spent some time in conversation with me and when a photographer arrived he placed his arm around my shoulders and together we smiled at the camera.

Arriving home that night I shared with my family that I had spent the morning with a famous man. Naturally they asked excitedly, "Who was he, Mum?" Unfortunately I could not answer the question. I knew he was a cricketer, but I had never followed cricket. That evening, while viewing the news, I saw on the screen a man featured in an ad for a herbicide. I excitedly jumped off the lounge shouting, "That's him! That's the man I met!"

The entire family looked at the screen and then groaned. "Mum, don't you know who that is? That's Glenn McGrath! He's one of Australia's finest and most respected cricketers." The photo of Glenn McGrath with his arm around me is now one of my most prized possessions. I met Glenn McGrath and talked with him, but I missed the significance of the moment because I didn't have sufficient knowledge,

or a personal relationship, to realise who he was.

The first step in finding Christ, which enables our prayer life to grow, is seeking a personal relationship with God, rather than simply seeking to understand the theology of the Word of God. Too often we miss opportunities to connect with Christ because we don't know Him. We only know about Him. The Word of God is often referred to as a love letter to His people; His communication with us. Reading the Scriptures with the understanding that God's Word is His personal communication with us will radically change our approach to prayer.

The Scriptures are overflowing with stories of men and women who knew Christ and this knowing brought them into deep communion with God. Abraham knew God's voice so well that he took his son Isaac to be sacrificed, and is known as the "friend of God". David was so connected to Christ that he was known as "the apple of God's eye". The entire book of Ephesians is Paul's prayer for the Christians of Ephesus.

Joyce Meyer wrote (*The power of simple prayer*), "One of the best things about prayer is that it is progressive. It is not a skill we master; it is an unfolding relationship we enjoy." Christ desires us to find Him. Through God's Word the story of redemption unfolds like a panorama of passionate love, drawing me to repentance and a desire to know Him, but finding peace comes through the revelation of who Jesus Christ is.

Christians can experience prayer as an ascent of the mind to God rather than a continual flow of prayer requests. Our prayers can become predominately seasons of praise, giving us the peace that passes all human understanding.

If we find the Christ of the Scriptures, we will experience an inner place of serenity, peace and delight, away from the storms of life. When this experience becomes ours we will find quietude in Him, and our prayer lives will be empowered and empowering. God's admonition is, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

Liz Bamford is prayer ministries coordinator at Glenvale church, Toowomba, Queensland.

# **Programme**



#### **Seminar 1: Meditation Matters**

(Primarily a **theory** session) **The What, Who & Why of Meditation.** 

- 1. Meditation is Not What You Think!
- 2. Differences Between Christian Meditation and Other Forms of Meditation
- 3. Biblical References to Meditation
- 4. Meditation Dangers
- 5. The Power of Prayer
- 6. Practical Outcomes from Meditation
- 7. Question & Answer Session

#### **Seminar 2: The Mechanics of Meditation**

(Primarily a **practical** session)

The How, Where & When of meditation.

- 1. Review of Seminar 1 and Homework Activity
- 2. Meditation Positions and Postures
- 3. Meditation Places
- 4. Meditation Times and Seasons
- 5. Meditation and Relaxation
- 6. Meditation Resources
- 7. Question & Answer Session



www.lrhartley.com/meditation (Lionel Hartley, PhD)

(Topic and main title suggested by Joanna de Bruyn)

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